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PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA



WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

KING KONG

King-sized look at the biggest blockbuster of 2005!

ISSUE 44 SEPTEMBER 2005



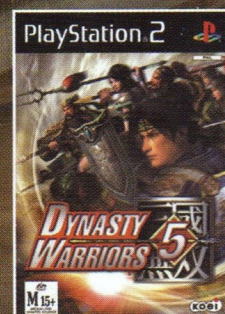
"Hero Worship"

DYNASTY WARRIORS 5

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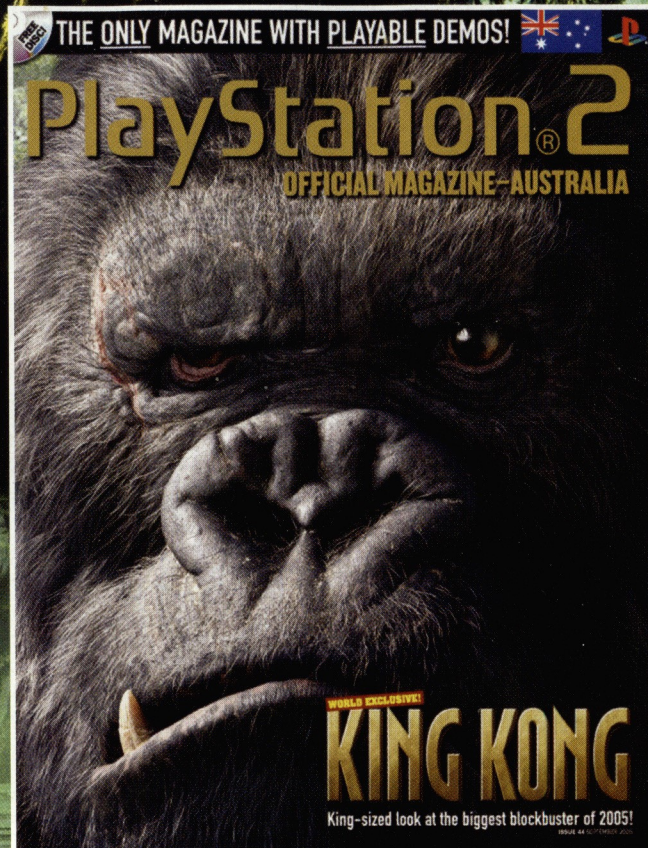


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PlayStation 2

Contents



32 King Kong
An exclusive look at the game you'll go ape over!



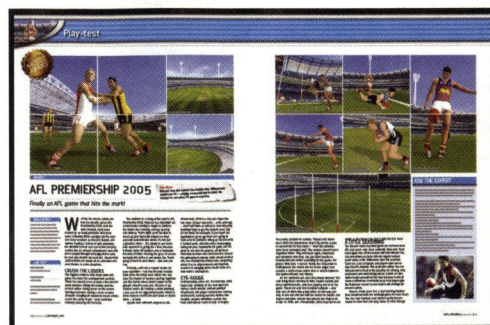
52 PSP Launch Guide
All the essential info you need for the PSP launch!



48 True Crime: NYC
Can you handle the truth? Exclusive details right here!



42 Hitman: Blood Money
The coldest game to hit PS2? You better believe it!



66 AFL Premiership 2005
The best Aussie Rules game yet? First review inside!



62 PlayStation 3
All the latest developments in the future of PlayStation!



96 On the DVD
God of War, Madagascar and plenty more!

PREVIEWS

22 CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR

It's a dirty job, but somebody has to take out this trash!

24 BUZZ: THE MUSIC QUIZ

Get your hands on your buzzer without going blind!

25 RICKY PONTING INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2005

Does Punter have the balls to step up to the crease against *Cricket 2005*? Bloody oath he does!

26 TOTAL OVERDOSE

An over-the-top bullet extravaganza – you'll think someone slipped a frag grenade into your enchilada!

28 COMMANDOS STRIKE FORCE

Before Delta Force, before the SEALs – there were the Commandos. You're either on their side or in their sights!

30 EVIL DEAD REGENERATION

Ash is back to kick some deadite ass all over again. Who wants a little?

FEATURES

32 KING KONG

A king-sized exclusive look at the killer gorilla and the breathtaking game bearing his name!

38 MUST SEE TV

The best the idiot box has to offer, heading straight for your PS2!

42 HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

This game is money – if you don't believe us, take a look for yourself!

48 TRUE CRIME: NEW YORK CITY

A new cop, a new city and a new attitude – Activision has a brand new bag, baby. Exclusive report straight from the The Big Apple.

52 PSP LAUNCH GUIDE

Everything you always wanted to know about PSP but were afraid to ask. Don't go shopping on September 1 without it! 15 hot PSP games reviewed!

REGULARS

06 EDITOR'S LETTER

08 LOADING...

18 FEEDBACK

62 PLAYSTATION 3

78 PLATINUM

80 PLAYGROUND

82 DVD REVIEWS

83 TECHNOFILE

84 SUBSCRIPTIONS

86 RE-BOOT

90 RE-PLAY

92 CHEATS

94 GAMESTATION

96 ON THE DVD

98 NEXT ISSUE

REVIEWS

66 AFL PREMIERSHIP 2005

Aussie Rules? It sure does!

70 EYETOY: KINETIC

Who said games will only make you fat? Start working up a sweat!

72 THE INCREDIBLE HULK: ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION

Smash, rampage, pillage and plunder!

74 FANTASTIC FOUR

Are they really that fantastic?

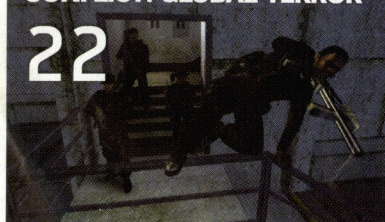
76 BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS 2: TRUCK ME HARDER!

Okay, but only because you said so...



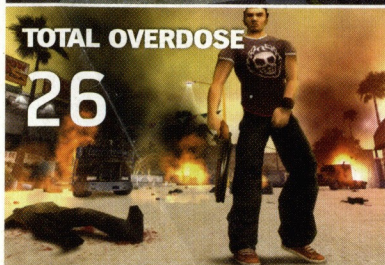
CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR

22



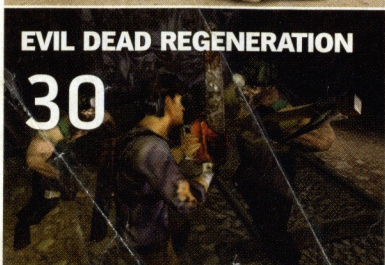
TOTAL OVERDOSE

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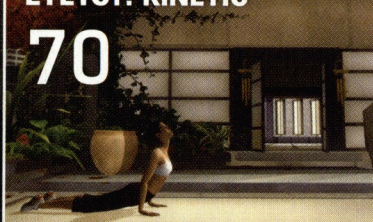
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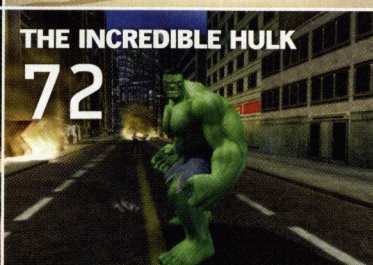
EYETOY: KINETIC

70



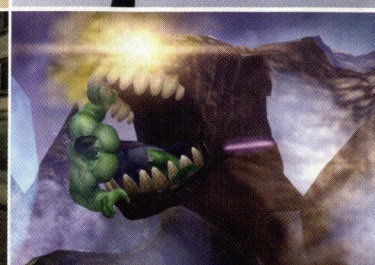
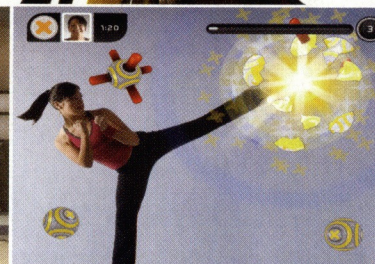
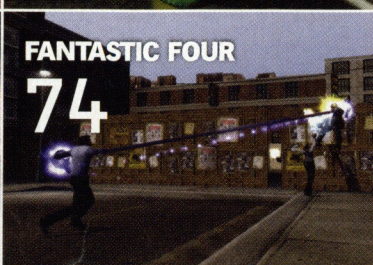
THE INCREDIBLE HULK

72



FANTASTIC FOUR

74



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Jimmy and Rach, and Hayley and Nik :: Ting
"The Negotiator" Fluerty :: Jase Steel :: Brad,
Brad, Nicole, Nicole :: Thanks to Tricia and
Joven for throwing the surprise birthday

DERWENT  HOWARD



EDITOR'S LETTER

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

a hidden sex mini game that was buried in the code by Rockstar. The mini game sees CJ heading inside his girlfriend's houses for some fairly graphic depictions of sex. Don't rush to dig out your copy of *San Andreas* though. Although the mini game code does exist within the PS2 disc, it has been locked out of the game and cannot be accessed without unauthorised software.

So why will it be banned if you can't access the raunchy content legitimately? Well, *San Andreas* has already been reclassified in America (it was bumped up from a Mature rating to Adults Only) as a result of the mini game's existence. Our classification board, the OFLC, is currently re-evaluating the game. If they find the content to be suitable for adults only the game will be banned. The lack of an R rating in Australia for videogames means that adult content cannot be sold. If *San Andreas* is banned the OFLC will essentially be saying that it was okay when 15 year-olds were watching CJ kill hundreds of people but the moment he has consensual sex with his girlfriend the game has to be banned. Again, what the?!

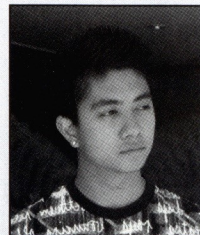
NARAYAN PATTISON

Editor



TRISTAN OGILVIE

I've been really psyching myself up for the PSP launch. I even took my Nintendo DS and smashed it over one knee. Okay, so it wasn't mine – but I totally did that kid a favour. He'll thank me later.



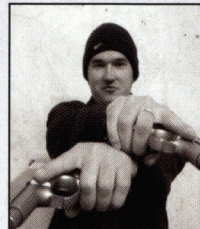
PHILLIP JORGE

I celebrated my 23rd birthday by downing an entire bottle of Absinthe. I certainly won't be doing that again – it was like there was a party in my mouth and everyone was throwing up.



LUKE REILLY

We've been getting stuck into *Ricky Ponting* this month. I've been getting my arse handed to me by Tristan, but it's better than watching Paul work out. Plus the office doesn't smell like sweaty balls.



PAUL FREW

I just got back from a week in Tokyo. Highlights included a tour through Capcom's *Resident Evil 4* studio, going on a Sake-fuelled karaoke rampage and getting lucky with Miyoko-san. (Give it up, Paul, we know you're lying – Ed).



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Turn to page 84 for all the details.

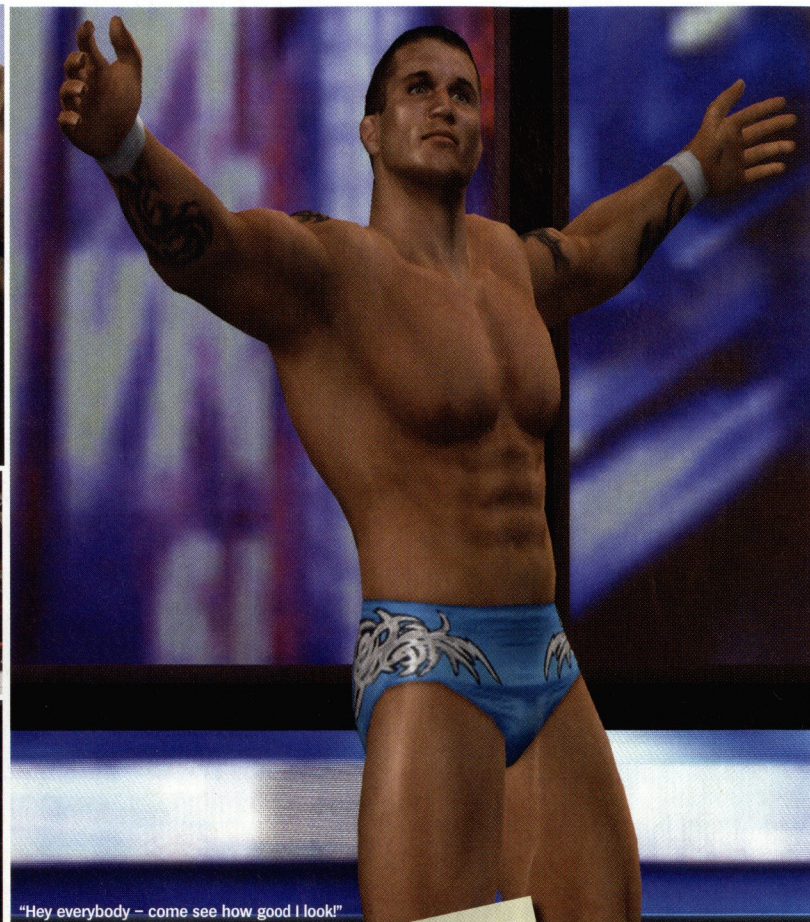
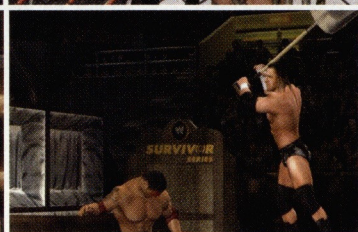
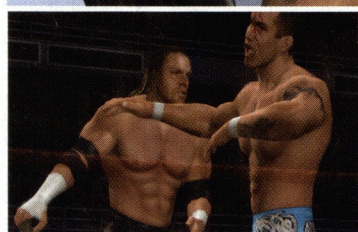
A large military helicopter, likely an AH-64 Apache, is shown in flight from a low angle, banking sharply to the left. The helicopter is olive green and tan, with "ARMY" visible on its side. The main rotor blades are blurred from motion. The background shows a vast, flat landscape under a cloudy sky.

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It's the most advanced Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter in the world today, requiring a new breed of pilot with exceptional skills to command it. However, it's within reach of just about any Year 12 Maths student who meets Defence Force entry requirements. Initial assessment and testing puts you under no obligation to proceed with your application. However should you be successful, you'll receive some of the most advanced flying training in the world to provide you with the skills to become an Army Pilot. You will never stop learning, honing your flying skills and significantly influencing future Army aviation capabilities. So if you have at least Year 12 English and Advanced Maths, are coordinated and highly motivated, call **13 19 01** or visit www.defencejobs.gov.au/aviation

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"What? Wrestling isn't a real sport? Boy, is my face red!"



"Hey everybody - come see how good I look!"

GREASE UP

RING THE BELL!

SmackDown! vs RAW 2006 hitting the ring this year!

The king of the wrestling ring is returning and looking to inflict more damage than ever before. *SmackDown! Vs RAW 2006* will build on the success of its predecessors by adding new features, an up-to-date roster and a much-improved online mode.

"WWE *SmackDown! Vs RAW 2006* showcases all of the excitement and energy of the WWE," said Peter Dille, senior vice president of worldwide marketing, THQ.

"The WWE is one of the premier franchises in the industry and this title is primed to deliver the most intense wrestling gameplay along with true-to-life graphics, resulting in the deepest and most realistic wrestling experience ever."

Some of the new features we can expect to see include handy momentum and stamina meters and Buried Alive matches. The momentum meter plans on giving matches a more, dare we say, realistic style. Matches will now go back and forth like they do on TV.

You'll need to continually lay the smackdown to keep your momentum up, but one punch to your jaw will see you bar dropping faster than Paris Hilton's panties.

The stamina meter does exactly what its name suggests and measures your wrestlers energy level. Pulling off power moves that require a lot of effort will take its toll on you, so you'll need to find a balance between staying on top and conserving your energy for the long haul.

Finally, the match every wrestling fan has been asking for since the original *Smackdown!* on PSone, the Buried Alive match will be a main event in *WWE Smackdown! Vs RAW 2006*. The match is an extension of the Casket match. First you'll have to stuff your opponent into an open casket and then bury him six feet underground. The mechanics will be the same in that you'll have to battle to keep them prone in the casket and in the hole.

Many more features are yet to be announced but expect us to have them all in our exclusive six-page feature next issue. Stick around! **PF**



DELICIOUS DIVA

So maybe watching sweaty blokes grapple with each other for 20 minutes isn't your bag - we understand. However, the super-sexy Stacy Keibler is definitely not a sweaty bloke. You don't need to be a WWE fan to admit Stacy is a perfect 10, and she'd snap you in half like a twig if she wanted to. What a fox! In French she would be called 'la renarde' and she would be hunted with only her cunning to protect her. Schwing!



STOP PRESS: A few minutes before deadline the classification of *GTA: San Andreas* in the United States was changed to AO (Adults Only) because of an unlockable

SADDLE UP!

SHOUT YOURSELF HORSE

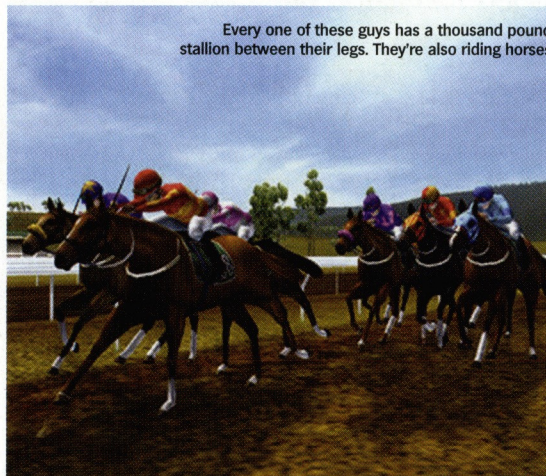
Sidhe backs a winner on PS2

It's an Aussie institution, and it turns even the most penny-pinching members of the public into professional punters for just one day of the year. It's the Melbourne Cup; the race that stops the nation – and it's rounding the final bend and headed for release on PlayStation 2 this November.

Melbourne Cup Challenge is being developed by Sidhe Interactive, the New Zealand based developers behind the record breaking Rugby League series. The game will not only feature the famous race itself but also Flemington Race Course, Classic Caulfield, The Caulfield Cup and Royal Ascot Race Course, among others.

Armchair jockeys will be whipped into a frenzy by an engrossing career mode that's set to include auctions, horse breeding, training and stable management. There's even an online multiplayer mode if you feel like putting your nag on the net.

The game will also feature the talents of Frankie Dettori, who we presume is either some kind of mafia boss or a famous jockey (or hopefully, both – dud horses would be fitted with concrete horseshoes instead of getting a trip to the glue factory) We'll know soon enough whether or not it has a heart the size of Phar Lap, but at the moment it looks to have stronger legs than a thoroughbred from Gai Waterhouse (we mean the horse trainer, not the day spa that Paul frequents). **TO**



Every one of these guys has a thousand pound stallion between their legs. They're also riding horses



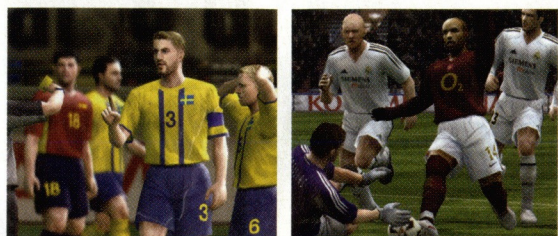
GOOOOORRRR!!!

SOCCER STAR SIGNED

Pro Evo 5 nabs Thierry Henry

He's got more pairs of Golden Boots than Elton John and Liberace combined, and now French soccer legend Thierry Henry has been snapped up to become the face of Pro Evolution Soccer 5.

In case you're completely lost at this point, Thierry Henry has been a star of the Arsenal Football Club for the past seven years – scoring an incredible 41 goals during the 2004/2005 season. The fleet-footed striker is reportedly a huge fan of the Pro Evo series, and is suitably chuffed to get his mug on the cover of this year's edition.



Most English soccer players have above average ball handling skills

But you won't just be paying for his face on the box, Pro Evolution Soccer 5 will also be even more realistic than previous instalments in the franchise (hard to imagine), and the controls both on and off-the-ball will apparently be more intuitive than ever – making it irresistible to the many fans of the series.

And let's not forget that we're not just talking about PS2 anymore – Pro Evo 5 is also scheduled for a run on the PSP when it's released later this year. It certainly looks like soccer fans will have plenty to smile about (that's when they're not snapping at us for calling football, 'soccer'). **TO**

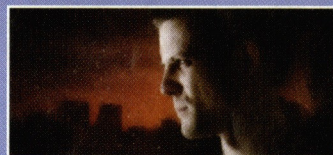
i Info Nudge

WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners from our July issue #42, particularly those who tracked down Crypto hidden behind the GTA Liberty City Stories banner on the editorial page. **Destroy All Humans!** winners: P Pervan, Qld; S Wagner, Qld; N Foster, SA; D Garrett, Vic; A Clark, Vic; J Zee, NZ; Y Higham, NSW; L Katan, NZ; A Gibson, ACT; H Kim, Qld. **Juiced** winners: R Kilroy, NSW; J Catania, NSW; L Leeming, Vic; A Gronlund, NSW; D Udhan, NZ; W MacGregor, WA; T Warwick, NZ; I Coglan, NSW; N Hook, Vic; F Hyde, NSW. **MGS3** winners: T Grassick, Qld; A Weston, Vic; S Milgate, NSW.

BRING ON THE PAYNE!

According to the Hollywood Reporter, Max Payne is heading to the big screen courtesy of a deal between 20th Century Fox and Collision Entertainment. The prospect of a Max Payne movie was actually touted back in 2002, but it seems it may actually come to fruition this time. The original Max Payne, released in 2001 is best remembered for its classy use of 'Bullet Time'. It was the story of a New York cop whose wife and baby were murdered by drug addicts. Payne subsequently joined the DEA and went undercover with the mob. He discovered the source of the drug, but was framed for the murder of his partner. We'll stop before we ruin anything. Producer Scott Faye has said the film will have a distinctively Dirty Harry vibe, but there's no word who'll be donning Max's leather jacket. Max Payne joins the ever-growing list of big screen videogame adaptations either in the can or on the horizon, like Hitman, SpyHunter, Doom and BloodRayne to name a few.



ANIMAL CRACKERS

The ultra-violent animated series Happy Tree Friends is set to become an ultra-violent videogame. Characterised by ridiculously adorable animals that are slaughtered, burnt, decapitated, minced and shredded in more ways than you can imagine, it will certainly make for an interesting experience. At the time of going to print, details about the game had not been confirmed – but we'll have more the minute we find Cuddles, Giggles and the rest of the gang and beat them with a sock full of quarters.



GHOST BUSTA

It's no surprise, but Majesco has announced its bringing Ghost Rider to the PS2 and PSP just in time for the release of the Nicolas Cage film next year. Ghost Rider is one of Marvel's lesser-known characters, albeit one with a devoted cult following. When Johnny Blaze's father is diagnosed with cancer, Blaze makes a deal with the devil, trading his soul for his father's health. Unfortunately, this means Johnny must spend every night as Ghost Rider. Okay, it's a little weird, but the mix of supernatural themes with motorcycle combat sounds like good fodder for a game to us. Comic authors Garth Ennis and Jimmy Palmiotti, who also wrote the script for THQ's The Punisher, have written the game's story.





BLOKE IN THE PUB

Oh, where to start this month?

Firstly, this little ratings system overhaul. I'm all for making it painfully obvious for people what is and isn't appropriate for their six-year-old kids – if a big red MA15+ icon will do that, then so be it. Maybe they'll stop crying once they realise they should have been paying attention to the ratings all along instead of running to *A Current Affair* when little Timmy stabs a classmate with a compass (research indicates less than six percent of kids can be affected in some way by inappropriate entertainment – which means the rest are just pains in the arse). What I don't get is the insistence by some ministers with censorship responsibilities that an R18+ rating would place children in jeopardy. Take note: are you AWARE that kids already have access to these games? Games like *GTA: San Andreas* and *The Punisher* ARE adults-only games – and they're rated as MA15+ games because YOU won't allow a higher rating to be implemented. You're making it worse, not better – plus you're making Australia a laughing stock to a multi-billion dollar industry. Are you getting this, or do you want me to say it slower? Stop penalising the majority of gamers in Australia for the Federal Government's inability to provide classification control at retail level.

The other item of note this month is Hillary Clinton's personal crusade against the "lewd sex" in *GTA: San Andreas*. In case you weren't aware, there's been a debacle over a hidden minigame in *GTA: SA* – a sex minigame that was removed before release but is obtainable with an aftermarket cheat device like an AR Max. One – criticism of "lewd sex" from a woman still married to Bill "that's a cigar in my pocket" Clinton means NOTHING. Two – lewd? It's one of the only non-violent things in the game, it's strictly consensual and involves pleasuring CJ's girlfriend – not CJ. When did sex become a bad thing? Did I miss a meeting? I assume she hasn't played *Playboy: The Mansion*. Hillary, this isn't the Dark Ages – EVOLVE or get OUT of the gene pool.

CENSORED

RATINGS SEASON

Good news and bad news

The classifications for computer games in Australia have been standardised with the classifications for films, and the appearance of Australian classification ratings has changed.

There's good news and bad news. The good news is that the standardisation of ratings puts games one step closer to broader acceptance within the community as a mature form of entertainment (more or less – we still can't get enough of *LEGO Star Wars*). As trivial as it seems, Australia is the first country in the world to classify games and films under the same ratings guidelines. For instance, the G8+ rating has been scrapped and replaced by the more familiar PG rating.

The bad news is at this point the government is still unwilling to introduce an R rating for videogames. The review of ratings guidelines by the Office of Film and Literature Classification was unrelated to whether an R rating for games should be introduced. The OFLC review was related to poor understanding of ratings in general, regular confusion between the ratings M and MA and little consumer awareness about games ratings in general – particularly among parents, most often the ones who are surprised to find EB is a games store and not something you get from eating bad oysters.

However, common ratings for games and films mean an R18+ rating for videogames is really only one step away. Associate Professor Jeffrey Brand of Bond University, part of a reference group for the OFLC, has told *The Age* that R18+ rated games are inevitable here, and believed they would probably be available after the next classification review.

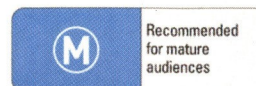
Australia is the only developed country in the world that does not have an adults-only category for videogames. **LR**



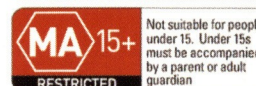
General



Parental guidance recommended



Recommended for mature audiences



Not suitable for people under 15. Under 15s must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Opponents of an R18+ rating claim the introduction of one would see adult orientated games getting into the hands of young children. However, adult orientated games are getting into the hands of young children because of the absence of an R18+ rating, not the other way around – so really it's their fault, and not the games industry's. Here's a selection of games restricted to persons 18 years and over in New Zealand, but are rated MA15+ in Australia simply because it's the highest rating the OFLC is allowed to use. Still think your anti-R18+ stance has merit, you boneheads?

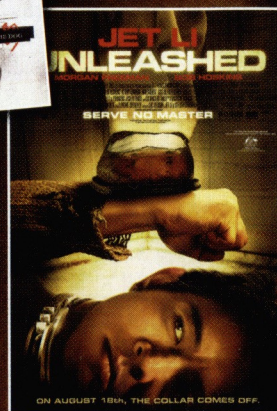
The Punisher • Mortal Kombat: Deception • Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance • Cold Winter • The Getaway • The Getaway: Black Monday • Driv3r • GTAI • GTA: Vice City • GTA: San Andreas • Mafia • True Crime: Streets of LA

UNLEASHED!

SERVE NO MASTER!

Win free double passes!

Thanks to Hoyts we've got 10 double passes to the upcoming film *Unleashed* and 10 copies of the *Massive Attack: Danny the Dog* soundtrack to give away. Featuring international martial arts superstar Jet Li, Academy Award winner Morgan Freeman and fiery stalwart Bob Hoskins, *Unleashed* is an action drama set in the mean streets of Glasgow. Danny (Li) has been kept as a near-prisoner by his "Uncle Bart" (Hoskins); trained to attack and kill. When Danny has a chance encounter with soft-spoken blind piano tuner Sam (Freeman) and a sudden coup separates Danny from Bart and his mob, Danny takes refuge with Sam and his daughter. However, Danny must soon fight back to protect his new family and bury his troubled past. To win a double pass and soundtrack, simply tell us your favourite Jet Li movie and why, and fire it in to the usual address! *Unleashed* is scheduled for release on 18 August.



This film has advertising approval, check the classification closer to the release date. For terms and conditions, refer to the *Rugby League 2/AFL Premiership 2005* promotion on page 12.

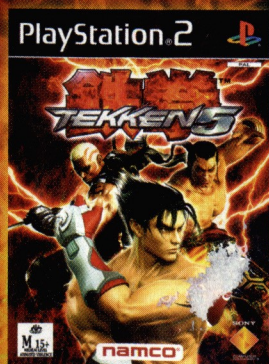
Resident Evil 5 has been officially announced for PS3, and the desert themed teaser trailer we've seen suggests that the 'zombies' will be nastier than ever!

fun,
anyone?
PlayStation 2

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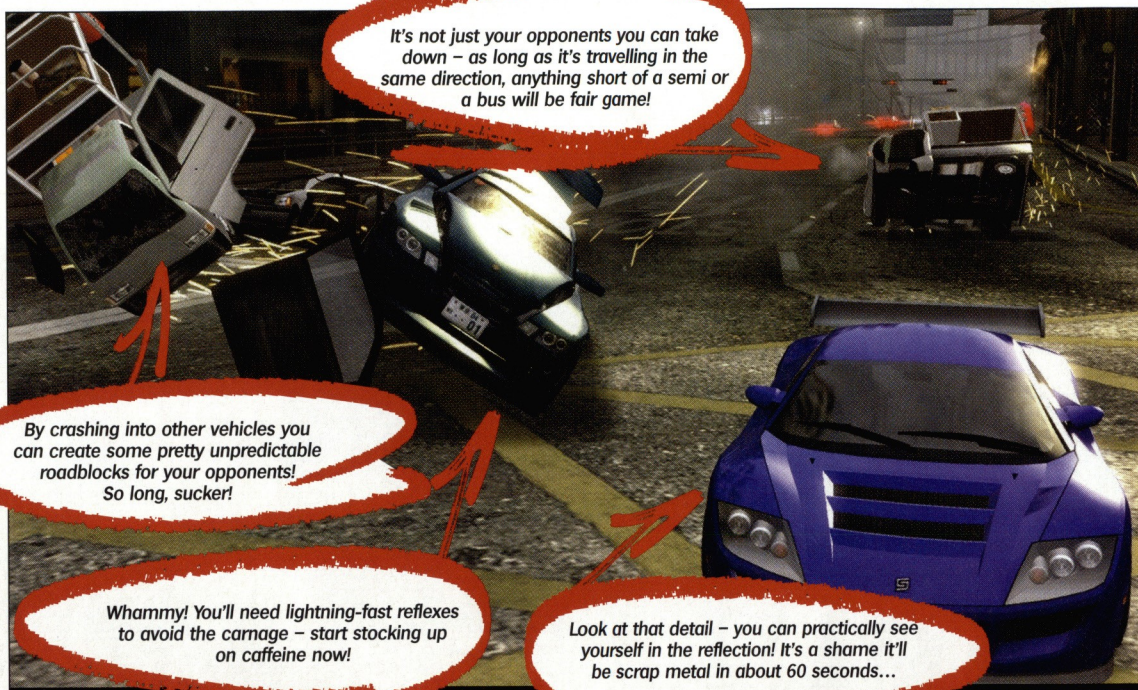
the top ten

GAMING DON'TS

- 1. Sore losing**
Hurling your Dual Shock through a window and repeatedly backing your car over it – before getting out and shouting angrily at the splintered remains really reeks of bad sportsmanship.
- 2. "I pressed the button!"**
Yes, we know you "pressed the button". You can stop telling us now. Trouble is you didn't press it fast enough. That's kind of why you're dead now.
- 3. Mic in pants trick**
Please – don't stick the SingStar microphone down your pants again. Honestly, we really don't want to hear "a solo from One-eyed Willy". The only reason we agreed the first time because we thought he must have been some old harmonica-playing blues man.
- 4. Controller miming**
Violently jerking the Dual Shock upwards when playing a platform game does not make your character jump any higher. Dual Shocks aren't motion sensitive, people. Also? Sticking your tongue out doesn't do you any favours either.
- 5. EyeToy in pants trick**
Again, we really don't want to see you get a high score in EyeToy Play's Kung Foo with your "trouser-sheathed Bo staff". Your fists of fury will suffice, grasshopper.
- 6. Hitting reset**
It's still the first half of our Pro Evo match, and we're already giving you a flogging. Now suddenly we're staring at the title screen. Do that again and we'll introduce you to our 'reset button', which is the name we've given to this sack of doorknobs.
- 7. Dual Shock in pants trick**
No, don't go to the options menu and set the vibration to 'On'. Please, don't play Crash mode in Burnout 3. We don't care if "five minutes is all you need". You're really creeping us out now.
- 8. Causing a diversion**
Pointing over our shoulder and shouting "look, it's Jessica Alba, Sarah Michelle Gellar and Stacy Keibler playing naked Twister!" when we're on the last lap of a GT4 endurance race won't be quite as funny as you think (why do we always fall for that?).
- 9. Bad hygiene**
We're not being selfish, we just would have preferred you played with our PS2 before you'd eaten that melted Snickers bar, dug a hole in your garden bare-handed and rummaged through our garbage looking for last week's TV guide.
- 10. Sore winning**
Pointing at the contents of your cat's litter tray and screaming "THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE AND THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE!" is not the way to celebrate beating us at Soul Calibur 2. Can't we just play best two out of three?

SCREENSHOT OF THE MONTH

Burnout Revenge – A dish best served cold!



MORE BALLS

FOOTY FEVER!

Freebies for footy fanatics!

Giving away footy games is always a recipe for disaster – you can't dish out one code without devotees of the other feeling left out. We couldn't have that, so thanks to both Tru Blu Entertainment and Sony Computer Entertainment Australia we've got five copies of Rugby League 2 and five copies of AFL Premiership 2005 to give away. We've hidden both an NRL player and an AFL player on different pages inside the magazine. All you need to do is find one, write in and tell us which page he's on! Start searching!



HOW TO ENTER – Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with either "Footy Giveaway", "Unleashed Giveaway" or "Speaker Giveaway" in the subject line or post your entries via snail mail to OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355. Email entrants are entitled to one email per competition only. Entries must be clearly marked and include the name of the competition, your name, age, email address, contact number and, most importantly, your full address and postcode! All competitions close 24 September 2005. This competition is also open to NZ residents. Rugby League 2 and AFL Premiership 2005 release dates are subject to change without notice. Prizes will be provided upon release.

PS3 HANDS-ON?

TURNING JAPANESE

Playable PS3 in Tokyo?

It has been confirmed that this year's Tokyo Game Show will run from September 16 to 18, and don't be surprised if it features playable PS3 games on the show floor.

Sony Computer Entertainment president Ken Kutaragi mentioned last year that PlayStation 3 games should be playable at this year's TGS. It's worthwhile noting that there were no playable PS3 titles at E3 this year, so it's possible that schedule has changed. However, keep in mind there were no legitimate PSP titles available for hands-on testing back at E3 2004, yet four months later Sony delivered playable PSP games at TGS 2004 – so nothing's out of the question yet.

If you're planning on heading over there to try and smuggle one out, be aware entry will cost you around 1,200 yen (less than \$20 Aussie dollars). And say hello to Keiko for us – we've been meaning to call her back. **LR**



SOUND CHECK

PUMP UP THE VOLUME!

It might not blow women's clothes off, but it will rock you!

If you're sick of your TV speakers ruining your gaming experience then we might be able to help you out – we've got 10 Altec-Lansing XA 2021 speaker packages to give away.

The package contains two 3-inch satellite drivers and 5.25-inch long-throw woofer and can plug into your PC, TV, DVD, MP3 player and of course, your PS2.

To score one of these packages, all you have to do is tell us your favourite sound from any videogame. The best and most original answers will win one. You hear us? **PF**



For terms and conditions, refer to the Rugby League 2/AFL Premiership 2005 promotion on page 12

driver through the windscreen. FlatOut 2 should arrive early 2006.

AS SEEN ON CHANNEL

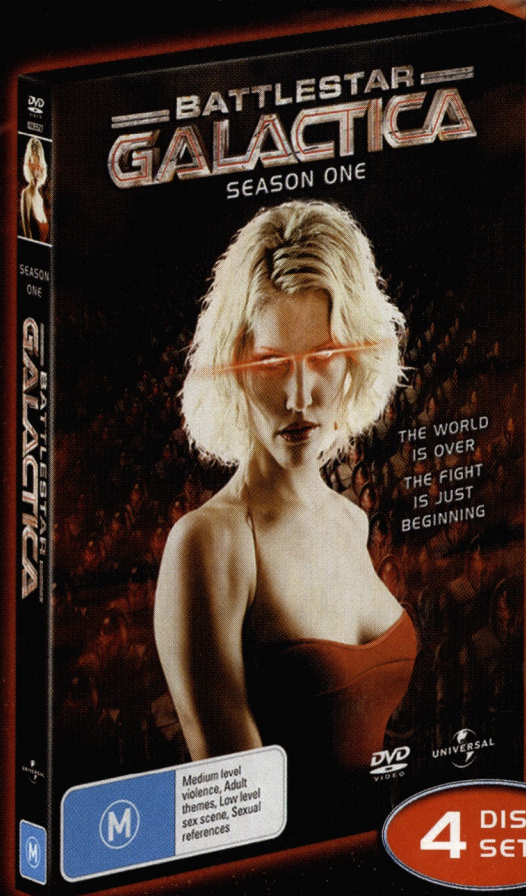


BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

SEASON ONE

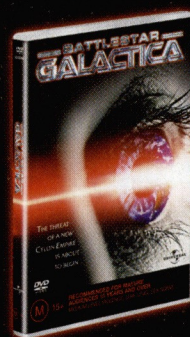
"BATTLESTAR GALACTICA HAS STEAMROLLED ALL OPPOSITION. THIS WAS THE REMAKE WE HAD TO HAVE."

MICHAEL IDATO, THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

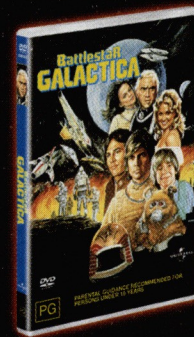


COMING TO DVD
ON 17 AUGUST

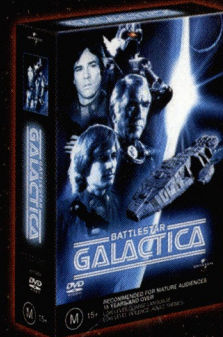
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PS2 TOP 10 GAMES CHART

1		JUICED has squeezed its way into the top slot – gamers just can't go past some solid street racing. Hot Japanese imports taking on US muscle and Aussie grunt – what's not to like? And to think this almost disappeared when Acclaim went bankrupt...
2		SINGSTAR POP BUNDLE serenades into second place. It looks like the prospect of belting out some genuine Aussie and New Zealand tracks has proved very tempting to hordes and hordes of PS2 owners. You don't even have to be a gamer to enjoy this!
3		MADAGASCAR rides the coat tails of the DreamWorks film directly into third spot on the podium – illustrating kids are both demanding and undemanding at the same time. They demand games, although they don't have to be original...

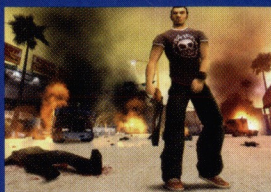
RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTOR
4	Star Wars Episode III: ROTS	Adventure	EA
5	Medal of Honor: European Assault	FPS	EA
6	Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	Adventure	Take 2
7	Gran Turismo 4	Racing	Sony
8	LEGO Star Wars	Adventure	Eidos
9	EyeToy: Play 2 Bundle	Party	Sony
10	WWE Smackdown! vs. Raw	Sports	THQ

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

AUGUST		
187 Ride or Die	Racing	Ubisoft
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	Platformer	Take 2
Dead to Rights II	Action	EA
Worms 4: Mayhem	Strategy	Atari

SEPTEMBER		
Brave	Action	Sony
Burnout Revenge	Racing	EA
Conflict: Global Terror	Action	Atari
Evil Dead Regeneration	Action	THQ
Ricky Ponting International Cricket 2005	Sports	Atari
Spartan: Total Warrior	Action	THQ
Tim Burton's Nightmare Before Christmas	Adventure	THQ
Total Overdose	Action	Atari

OCTOBER - DECEMBER		
24: The Game	Action	Sony
Brothers in Arms Earned in Blood	FPS	Ubisoft
Bully	Adventure	Take 2
Call of Duty 2: Big Red One	FPS	Activision
Darkwatch	FPS	Ubisoft
Getting Up	Action	Atari
Gun	Action	Activision
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	Action	EA
Hitman: Blood Money	Action	Eidos
Jak X	Racing	Sony
James Bond 007: From Russia With Love	Action	EA
King Kong	Action	Ubisoft
Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects	Action	EA
Need for Speed Most Wanted	Racing	EA
Prince of Persia: Kindred Blades	Adventure	Ubisoft
Ratchet Gladiator	Action	Sony
Rugby League 2	Sports	Tru-Blu
SOCOM 3: US Navy SEALs	Action	Sony
Soulcalibur III	Beat 'em up	Sony
SSX On Tour	Sports	EA
Star Wars: Battlefront 2	Action	EA
The Sims 2	Strategy	EA
The Warriors	Action	Take 2
Tomb Raider: Legend	Adventure	Eidos
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Lockdown	FPS	Ubisoft
Tony Hawk's American Wasteland	Sports	Activision
True Crime: New York City	Action	Activision
WRC: Rally Evolution	Racing	Sony
X-Men Legends 2	Action	Activision

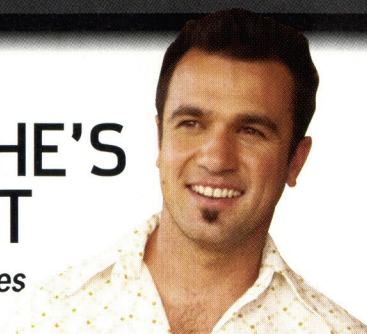


Loading

SINGING STAR

THAT'S WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT

Australian Idol Shannon Noll gives us advice on tackling his tune



With his hit single 'What About Me?' featured in the recently released, and office favourite, *SingStar Pop*, we decided to go to the man himself to get some tips on taking it on.

OPS2: What tips do you have for people tackling your song?

Shannon: Just go for it and enjoy it. Only Idol judges worry about pitch. What's [most] important is the spirit you deliver with the song.

OPS2: Will we have better luck with the chicks if we get high scores?

Shannon: Mate, I had no poultry on my farm so you may have to settle for a leg of lamb.

OPS2: What would happen if we kept getting low scores then?

Shannon: You'll end up on a blind date with Dicko and Mark Holden.

OPS2: We'll send Naz then. Why did you choose to cover 'What About Me'?

Shannon: It's a classic Australian song and [one that] deserves to live on always.

OPS2: How do you think you'd go when singing your song on *SingStar Pop*?

Shannon: Mate - I reckon I would really go for it. I would have to be better than the original singer right? Who is that Shannon Noll bloke anyway?

OPS2: Have you had any *SingStar* experience?

Shannon: Do you think I need it, mate? It's a bit late in the day for that, as I am already making my second album, which will be out in stores in October.

OPS2: What about karaoke experiences?

Shannon: Only when there's beer involved!

OPS2: What type of songs do you normally sing?

Shannon: Unfortunately, beer takes away both your fear of singing in public and your memory of what you sang.

OPS2: Do you think it's a good way to practise to become an Australian Idol?

Shannon: Mirror and hairbrush is always a good start but [my] best advice is to go play with a band and just start gigging. There's nothing like live work for honing your craft. **PF**

SWEATY PALMS

PSP DOT COM

PSP website kicks off

Want some more official Aussie PSP information? Jump on your PC and point your browser to www.yourpsp.com.au. There you can read all the latest on the handheld wonder and even take a 3D 'virtual tour' of the hardware. More importantly, when you pick up a shiny new PSP for yourself, this is the place to go to register for your free copy of the *Spider-Man 2* UMD movie.

Once you've registered as a member you'll also gain access to free downloadable content specifically created for the PSP, including bonus game levels and preview trailers along with a number of support applications and firmware upgrades.

One note though – the website is Flash based, so be sure to have Flash installed on your browser before you visit (sadly we don't mean the 'Janet Jackson at the Super Bowl'-style flash). A shame, really. **TO**



GfK

◆ New Entry
 ◆ Non-Mover
 ▲ Up from last week
 ▼ Down from last week

inform

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GET EM!

ON AUGUST 18th, THE COLLAR COMES OFF.



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10 COPIES OF

BURNOUT™ REVENGE

READER SURVEY ATTENTION ALL OPS2 READERS

Want to score a free copy of
Burnout: Revenge?

Come to think of it – that's probably a pretty stupid question. Who in their right mind wouldn't want to score a free game? Nobody, that's who – so we'll get right to the point.

To be in with a chance of scooping up a copy of Burnout: Revenge just head over to our website, www.ops2m.com.au and fill in our online survey. We want to know what you think about the magazine, which games you love and which ones you loathe, what you want to see more of and what you want to see less of, and any other feedback you want to get off your chest.

All this information will be squeezed into the OPS2 supercomputer, which is programmed to deliver a series of non-fatal electric shocks to the OPS2 crew to make us work even harder!

If we know what makes you lot tick we can continue to make the improvements in OPS2 Magazine that you want.

Thanks to EA we've got 10 copies of Burnout Revenge to give out, so get into it. Trust us, it's easy – you won't even have to study!

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REINVENTING YOUR DRIVING EXPERIENCE

SCAR

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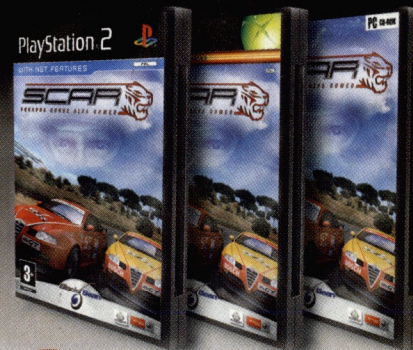


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General



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SPEAK TO US!

Come on, we know you guys are bursting to get involved. Share your thoughts with the nation's PlayStation 2 owners in OPS2's Feedback section and you could win an exclusive Atari T-shirt and this issue's Game of the Month! Write to us on paper or by email:

OPS2 Feedback
Derwent Howard
PO Box 1037
Bondi Junction, NSW 1355
Email: ops2@derwenthoward.com.au



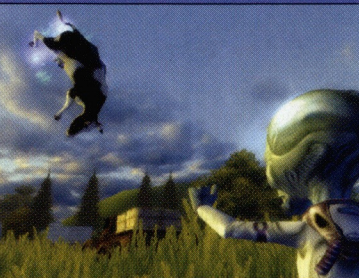
OPS2 chart

Some games mags are written by people who don't play games very often, but not OPS2 - in fact, we play games so much here that we almost never manage to get a tan in summer! Here's what's been making us pasty this month.



1. KING KONG

After seeing the movie trailer and playing Ubisoft's amazing game we've gone into a chest-beating rage at OPS2 Towers. It's ON like Donkey Kong!



2. DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

It's not the longest game in the world but running around as a psycho alien is so much fun we're already on our second play through.



3. GOD OF WAR

"C-c-c-c-combo!" Racking up 1000-hit combos is a rush like no other. They should have called it God of W-awesomeness!

MOON HARVESTING

Long time reader, first time writer. Firstly, I would like to ask why the hell isn't there a good sequel to the totally awesome PSone game, *Harvest Moon Return To Nature*? I only stopped playing it when I got *San Andreas*, which is also awesome. You can probably pick *Harvest Moon* up from the stores for like, five bucks. The last game I got was *WWE Smackdown! Vs Raw* and I think I've taken it out of the beloved PS2 about five times since I got it, and that was in like March.

What is up with parents and "That Bloody Machine!"? I know that it must be pretty frustrating for them but my dad just won't leave me alone about it. When I play wrestling I can even see his reflection from the TV from outside looking in and making a face as if he can't believe I'm playing it. I just came back from band camp (I play the Sax) and I get on it two days after I come home and he goes off his face at me! Unbelievable. Well, anyway, I've gone on enough. Keep up the good work, I look forward to your mag every day.

From your #178 fan,

Scott Ripper, via email

You're an enigma, dude. You must have the toughest sounding name of anyone who's ever written into our mag, yet you're a fan of one of the sissiest games ever made (not that there's anything wrong with that). *Harvest Moon*'s a gardening sim for those not in the know. We're guessing the reason there's no PS2 *Harvest Moon* game is that you, and possibly Don Burke, are the only people who bought the last one. Becoming a games designer or journalist would be the perfect way to get your parents off your back. Our parents never mentioned another word about 'wasting time playing videogames' the moment we started getting paid for doing it.



EASE UP ON GAMERS

Last night I was flicking through the channels when I stopped at the channel Seven news. They had another one of those 'games are warping young minds' things but this one really annoyed me. They had these two teenagers talking about how games are like drugs and if there were no games they'd be out getting jobs. They had probably been paid to say it. Then they went on about how gamers live in a virtual reality and never get jobs, and when they're playing everything around them blurs and they can't hear what people are saying. They talk about us as though we're some pitiful species. I manage to play three sports, learn guitar, get the highest marks in my class and fit in three hours of gaming a day - minimum! When will they leave us alone? Sony should build a giant rocket so we can fly off and colonise a planet of gamers. I just wanted to get this all out so I decided to direct it somewhere where people will be interested. Sorry if I sound like a crazy bastard. Once again thanks a lot for making this great mag. By the way, do you guys have a release date for *Resident Evil 4* yet? My zombie head popping lust is getting out of hand.

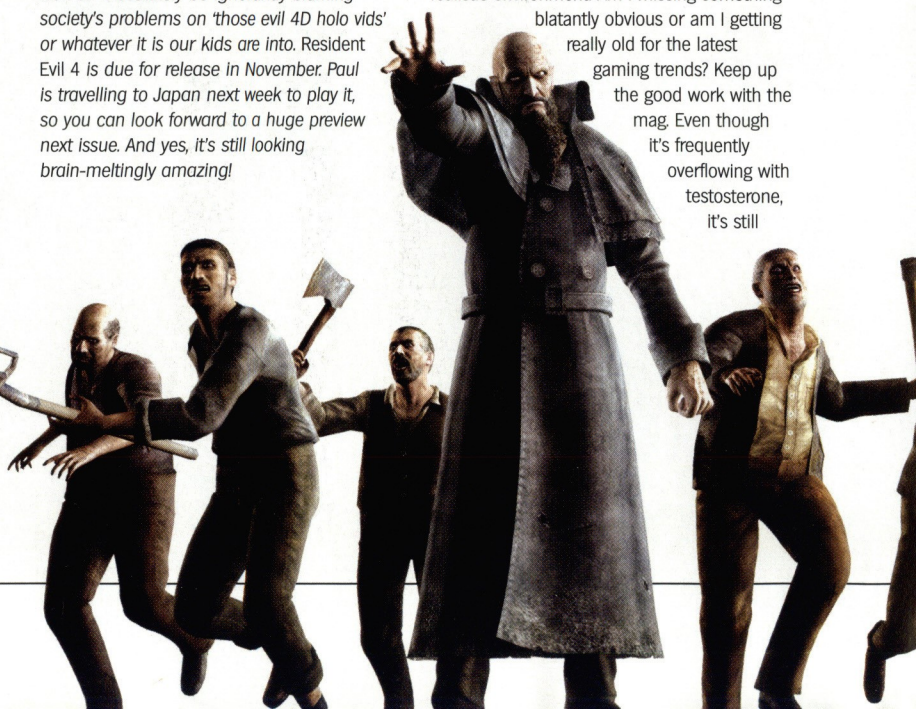
Brenainn Moushall, QLD

It's as simple as this: anything youngsters are doing that older people

don't understand the appeal of will always be used as a scapegoat in mainstream media. The Internet and heavy metal music are the other two interests that are usually trotted out whenever the current affairs shows feel they need to run another 'insert anything' is ruining your kids' lives' story. In another 30 years or so gaming will be as mainstream as movies are today and will cease to be a convenient scapegoat for the media. Of course, by then we'll all most likely be ignorantly blaming society's problems on 'those evil 4D holo vids' or whatever it is our kids are into. *Resident Evil 4* is due for release in November. Paul is travelling to Japan next week to play it, so you can look forward to a huge preview next issue. And yes, it's still looking brain-meltingly amazing!

VIOLENCE OVERDOSE

As an avid *San Andreas* player, I'm a bit disappointed with Rockstar. To me, *The Warriors* seems like nothing more than a very violent bash 'em-up but it's promoted as the Next Big Thing. As an old-timer gamer, I'm used to all kind of games but it saddens me to see the increasing amount of hardcore violence in games, with little more to them than ganging up and bashing nearly everyone in a quite realistic environment. Am I missing something blatantly obvious or am I getting really old for the latest gaming trends? Keep up the good work with the mag. Even though it's frequently overflowing with testosterone, it's still



enjoyable for us women gamers too.

Monica, via email

Being based on a brutal movie about gang warfare, it was inevitable that The Warriors would be a very violent game – much more so than GTA ever has been. Ever since Space Invaders there have always been tonnes of games about killing everything in sight, but as visuals and animation get more and more realistic, the violence in games is bound to get more graphic. If graphic violence isn't your bag you don't have to look far to find games that are just as engaging. Bully is another Rockstar title coming out this year that has no blood and no killing in it, but is just as gritty and deep as GTA or The Warriors.

PSP WORRY

Let me start off by saying THANK YOU for making such an amazing magazine (PS2 is so much better than Xbox) and your mag, yes, your mag, is the greatest thing I have ever laid eyes on. Now just imagine, on the very day the PSP comes out, a little boy in ragged clothing is standing outside of a gaming store in the rain and staring at the PSP he can't afford. He stands outside in the rain all day watching PS2 owners of all ages buying their own special PSPs and all he can do is hope that the clerk will feel sorry for him and hand him his very own PSP. Knowing that this won't happen he looks to the heavens hoping that the PS2 gods will drop one down to him, but since he didn't make an offering they don't give him one and he walks home never knowing

if he will ever receive his very own PSP, THE END.

On September 1st that little boy could be me. The reason for me becoming that boy is because I remember in a past issue that you almighty ones at OPS2 headquarters said that the revolutionary PSP was going to be about \$350 and after all my begging on streets and trying to find any loose change in movie cinema's I finally saved up enough money. But then I read in issue 41 (GREAT write up on The Warriors) that it is now nearly half a grand and now obviously I can't afford it. When I saw that the PSP was \$429.95 my hopes of buying my very own PSP slipped away to a galaxy far, far way.

Mark, via email

We're happy to tell you that the PlayStation gods have smiled upon you, Mark. Sony told us last month that the launch price of the PSP has dropped from \$429 to \$399.

SORE LOSERS

My friends and I are all obsessed with fighting and challenging each other in various games, and we all specialise in a certain field (racing, soccer etc) but there is one major problem: sore losers. I absolutely hate it when, after a long five round match in Tekken 4, I emerge victorious and my opponent just can't seem to accept defeat. Instead of having a rematch with me or something, they instead grunt and leave the room in a huff. I've tried all the usual lines like "Wow, you almost beat me!" and "That was SO close" in order to keep them playing

but they just get all pissed off! And then I'm alone, with no one to challenge. I don't know about you but I can't seem to hunker down and play a solid single-player game. It's either versus or nothing. What I'm asking you is if you know what to say in order to keep them in the game. Otherwise, I'm just sitting in my room while everyone else goes nuts in Burnout 3. They never seem to get pissed off at each other over anything! Why am I singled out? Please offer me some advice. It would help me quite a bit.

Leonard Ryman, SA

We have the same problem in the office. Luke won't even play Tekken 5 anymore because he's constantly sopping over his last thrashing. The key to gaming well with your mates is mixing it up a bit. You mentioned that all your mates are great at different games, so why not play some of them? Why are you sitting in another room when they play Burnout 3? It's one of the best games on PS2, and if you let them kick your arse on it a few times then they'd be happier to let you smack them around in Tekken. It's all about give and take. Nobody likes to lose all the time. That's why Paul's given up on girls and turned his attention to sheep.

WHAT ABOUT WWI?

I'm looking for shooting games based on WWI but can't seem to find any. Do any exist? And if not, how come there's an incredibly large amount of games based on WWII and none based on WWI? And another thing, how come nobody has capitalised on the idea of making

Here at OPS2 Towers, we've been hard at work putting some OPS2 information online, and our forums are now alive and very kicking. We've decided to run the best quotes from our forums here in Feedback, so you can get your point across and have it printed for posterity! Next time you're online be sure to get yourself across to www.derwenthoward.com.au and drop in and say "hi". Keep your thoughts about other consoles to yourself though, or we'll have to smack you with copies of our magazine!

On... PS3: How much will you pay?

The PS3 doesn't have a definite release date yet, but once a date and price is finalised, how much do you honestly think you'll spend on the release date, if at all? As some might just buy the console initially, while others may also spend a few hundred dollars on games, so what's your position? I'll be trading in my PS2 for a PS3 at EB no matter what. At this stage, I'm not sure if I would trade in my whole game collection as well, so I'll have to see about that. Not knowing what type of discount I'd get after trading in my PS2, I'd probably be willing to drop at least \$500, but probably no more than that. If a PS3 will be like \$1000, I'll probably wait a few months for the price to drop and continue playing my PS2. Many of us will have the money available to buy a PS3 no matter what the price, but I just can't see myself paying anything for it at this time.

Simon

Hmm, no matter what I would end up waiting months to get the money together. I don't know that I could part with my PS2 but then again the PS3 will have backwards capabilities. Hmm, decisions, decisions. I probably wouldn't pay more than \$500, but then again I'm weak when it comes to games.

ZUGAM

\$1000 is my limit. Paying anything above that is just silly. I don't think I'm gonna trade in my ps2, even though it's backwards compatible.

DaZa

On... Confessions of a gamer

Okay, tell us something embarrassing or stupid that you have experienced during your gaming lives. I'll kick things off.

I liked some of the Army Men games.

Renegade

I bought Hulk for PS2.

Woody

My mum beat me at Tekken 3.

Woody

Our PS2 games library includes Mary Kate and Ashley: Sweet 16.

SilverSparrow

I never finished GTAIII. In fact, I never unlocked the second island. I just used a cheat to jump over that bridge leading to it, then took the subway to the third island.

Pollard182

I move from side to side in racing games.

Cait

My brother finished The Matrix before I did so I told the guys that I finished it and just copied what my bro said.

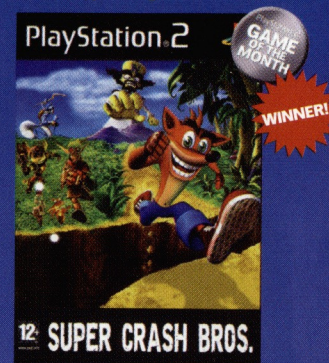
Renegade

I used my Dreamcast's web browser to look up porn.

Suteki

IT SHOULD BE A GAME

If you've got a great idea for a game, email it to ops2@derwenthoward.com.au or post it to the usual address. Don't forget to create a cool looking cover. The best one each month scores a free copy of the game of the month!

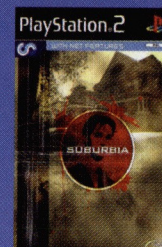


SUPER CRASH BROS

A fun exciting game where you came play as Jak, Dexter, Ratchet, Clank, Sly, Crash, Neo or many other characters. Battle it out in one of 16 levels as a team or by yourself and become the ultimate champion! Thanks for this opportunity – I know the blurb sort of sucks (I got a D in English) so please just judge the cover!

Aaron, via email

OPS2 verdict: Nice work, Aaron. It's a great game idea so we can turn a blind eye to your blurb. When your games studio is raking in millions you can always hire someone to write up the game boxes for you.

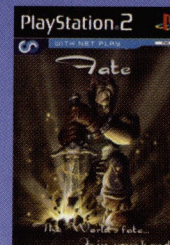


SUBURBIA

You're a simple man. You live in a quiet town with a wife and two kids, own a car and a house. While you have a normal everyday job. If everything is so ideal, why have you just woken up with a laser scope aimed at your forehead? With no clue as to who would want you dead, all you know is that in the struggle to save your own life, you're also fighting to save the one thing that means the most to you, and that is your existence in suburbia.

Simon Kent, via email

OPS2 verdict: We're not sure what suburbia has to do with fighting to save your wife and children but at least it's original.



FATE

Fate is an action RPG set in medieval times. You start off as a child being raised in the country town called Menomonta and your parents have just sent you off to the War Academy for fighting training. This is where the game kicks off. You do what you want, when you want. Improved AI gives each of NPCs their own personality, allowing them to think and act for themselves.

Joshua, via email

OPS2 verdict: Not a bad idea, but you won't have much money left after you bribe the creators of Fate not to sue your arse off

NET MATTER



Feedback

We spend the whole magazine talking to you - now it's your turn!

a modern shooter based on the upcoming World War III? I would sure as hell buy it. Anyway, that's about it. Hope you are able to shed some light on the lack of WWI shooters.

Barry Hatersill, via email

You're right, WWI hasn't got a fair run in games. The main reason there aren't any WWI games on PS2 is that it doesn't offer much over WWII, other than less sophisticated weapons, mustard gas and the necessity to sit in a muddy trench for months coming up with unique recipes for rats. WWII, eh? Have you got some contacts at ASIO you're not telling us about? Who's it going to be between - America and the rest of the world? We'd like to think WWII is far from a certainty, so let's not jump into any games about it just yet.

PS3 PRICE?

I just finished the July Issue of your

incredibly awesome mag and a thought occurred to me. How much the PS3 will cost after its release? Your preview has got me wanting it more than a night with Brooke Burke. I mean, look at those screenshots. No offence intended to Brooke Burke, but they look like just about the sexiest thing on the planet. Anyway, I was wondering about the cost. Something that I can't wait for is 24: The Game. The TV series is absolutely awesome. Although I do have my concerns about it. I personally think that the game won't be able to match up to the quality of the show. I still want it though (no, that does not mean I am asking you for it). What did you (The OPS2 crew) think of it? Oh and when you say "Percentage Complete", do you mean how far the developers are through making the game or how much of the game you have completed? I haven't really figured it out.

Backa, via email

Our money's on PlayStation 3 launching at \$699 in Australia. Considering PSone launched at \$799 and PS2 launched for \$749, this seems like the most logical price. With 24 Season 4 kicking it hard on TV we're hanging for the 24 game too. Check page 38 for our preview. The 'Percentage Complete' refers to the developer's progress with the game's completion, not ours.

NEXT-GEN FIGHT CLUB

Getting straight to the point, I read the article about the PS3 (issue 42, July for all you playing at home) and I'm very impressed. I think this machine will be our god by the time it comes out. It's going to make the other consoles look like the guy Russell Crowe beat up with the phone.

Philly, Vic

Ouch.

WHEN'S PS3 COMING OUT?

I've been reading on the Internet that Sony will be releasing the PS3 next Spring, but for some funny reason your magazine says that the PS3 will be out next March. I don't know who to believe - the official mag or the company that makes the damn thing. Even though this is a great mag I'm leaning towards the Spring release next year rather than what you think. Sorry, guys.

Josef Barker, via email

We're disappointed with your lack of faith. Luckily for you we're such nice guys that we'll overlook it and let you in on a little secret: 'next Spring' and 'next March' are the same date. When Sony gave Spring 2006 as the PS3's release date it was talking about the American Spring (March, April and May), not the Aussie one (September, October and November). America's seasons are six months out of synch with ours (on account of them being on the other side of the world).

THE KILLZONE

Two letters and one number have been on my mind for the past two years. Yep, you guessed it - PS3. I studied the slim silver shape of this machine and its strange new controller and then looked at the stats of it. I was so happy when I read that it was two times more powerful than the Xbox 360! What I find particularly kick ass about this new model is that it can hold up to seven wireless controllers and you can have two TVs hooked up. You know what that means? It means no more "Aww, you looked at my screen. You cheated!", shortly followed by a bit of a punch up. Then the next thing you know you're playing Killzone by yourself. Keep the good stuff coming.

Lewis, Qld

Only six months to go until the PS3 arrives in all of its next-generation glory. Flip to page 62 for a look at the latest batch of PS3 stunners. As for looking at other people's split-screens in multiplayer matches, our motto is 'If it's on the screen, it's in the game.'

INSIDE GAMING

Naz sits down with the King of the jungle, Mr. Kong himself

Naz: Mr. Kong. I have to say that it is an absolute honour to meet you. I've been a big fan of your work for years.

Kong: Thanks mate - appreciate your support.

Naz: You and Super Mario have been working together for like 20 years now. What's that feisty Italian plumber really like to work with?

Kong: I don't know what you're talking about. I think you're confusing me with someone else.

Naz: You know? Mario? You throw barrels at him and steal his girlfriend. What's the rascal plumber really like?

Kong: You're talking about Donkey Kong. I'm King Kong.

Naz: Okay, "King". Listen, I don't care what nickname your boyfriend has for you in the bedroom. Let's keep it on topic. Can you do that? So, after all the years of rivalry between you and Mario, it must have been great to kick the crap out of him in that Smash Bros game.

Kong: For the last time, I'm not Donkey Kong!

Naz: There's no need to get your banana in a knot, pal. You're a big monkey called Kong and he's a big monkey called Kong. Game Over! Case closed! Okay? You're not fooling anyone with this, 'you've got me confused with another Kong' crap. So, if Donkey Kong Jr. was your kid and there's no Mrs. Kong on the scene. Who was the lucky lady? Don't tell me it was Mario's gal, Princess Peach?

Kong: I've never even met Princess Peach!

Naz: Ohhhh... Gotcha. Say no more. I'll keep your little indiscretion on the 'down-low'. It's in the vault.

Kong: What?

Naz: So, where's your Tie? You normally wear that red one with "DK" on it.

Kong: Right! That's it! My name is KING KONG! I am a terrifying figure of legend who's name strikes fear into the hearts of the bravest of men. There have been three major motion pictures made about me. The simian you're talking about is some fictional videogame character called

Donkey Kong. We have nothing to do with each other!

Naz: What? Seriously?

Kong: Yes.

Naz: Huh. I've got to be honest. I've got another 150 questions here and they're all about Donkey Kong... Boy, is my face red... I've really got to stop doing my interview research when I'm drunk.

Kong: You're pathetic. This is the worst interview I've ever had.

Naz: Hey! There's no need to get personal. It was an easy mistake to make. You stupid monkeys all look the same.

Kong: Aarrggghhhh! [Beats chest]

Naz: Are you threatening me? You do NOT want to see me get out of this chair!

Kong: ...

Naz: That's what I thought.



PS2

PlayStation 2



SILVER. STUNNING.



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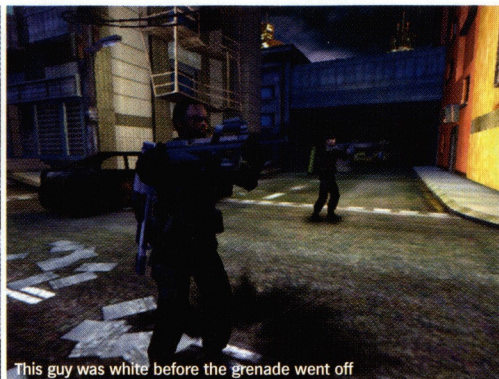


KSPS1650 MTV

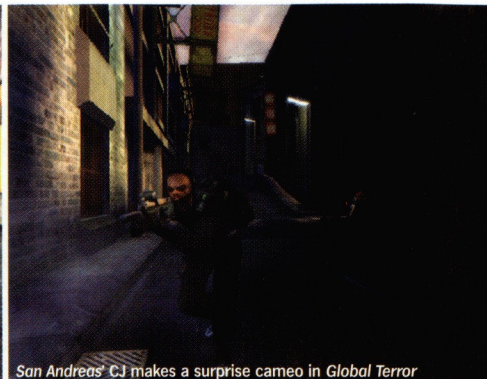
Pre-play



"Terrorise this! Biatch!"



This guy was white before the grenade went off



San Andreas' CJ makes a surprise cameo in Global Terror

FUN FACT!

The FMV cut-scenes in *Global Terror* were created by Sydney-based animators Plastic Wax, whose work has also been featured in *Juiced*, *Constantine* and *Hitman: Contracts*.



"When we said 'shoot the cockroach', we meant the enemies. Idiot"

X SHOOTER

CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR

If you're not with them, you're against them

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI ■ **DEVELOPER:** PIVOTAL GAMES ■ **WEB:** WWW.CONFLICT.COM ■ **LAST SEEN:** OPS2 #40 ■ **RELEASE DATE:** SEPTEMBER

With so many publishers releasing sub-standard movie tie-ins in the past twelve months, why didn't anyone think of snapping up the *Team America* license? Ignorantly blasting your way through historic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and the Egyptian pyramids with a team of awkwardly staggering marionette puppets would have been a blast, particularly if there'd been a four-player co-operative mode (and plenty of jokes about Matt Damon).

While it may be bereft of smutty humour and celebrity cameos, *Conflict: Global Terror* is the closest we're going to get to a *Team America* game – with no strings attached. After the disappointingly linear *Conflict: Vietnam*, the developers have gone back to the drawing board and created the new game from scratch, packing in a number of satisfyingly expansive environments from locations all over the globe.

Conflict: Global Terror lets you play the entire campaign

mode co-operatively with two players in the offline split-screen mode, or with up to four players in the online mode. Even when there are only two of you playing you still get control over two characters each in the four-man squad.

AI controlled team mates are easily directed with a simple command system. Apparently the developers considered a *SOCOM*-style voice command system, but were worried that it was too problematic trying to support the accents of players from all over the world, and realistically it's just much faster to press a button rather than to say "squad, cover me".

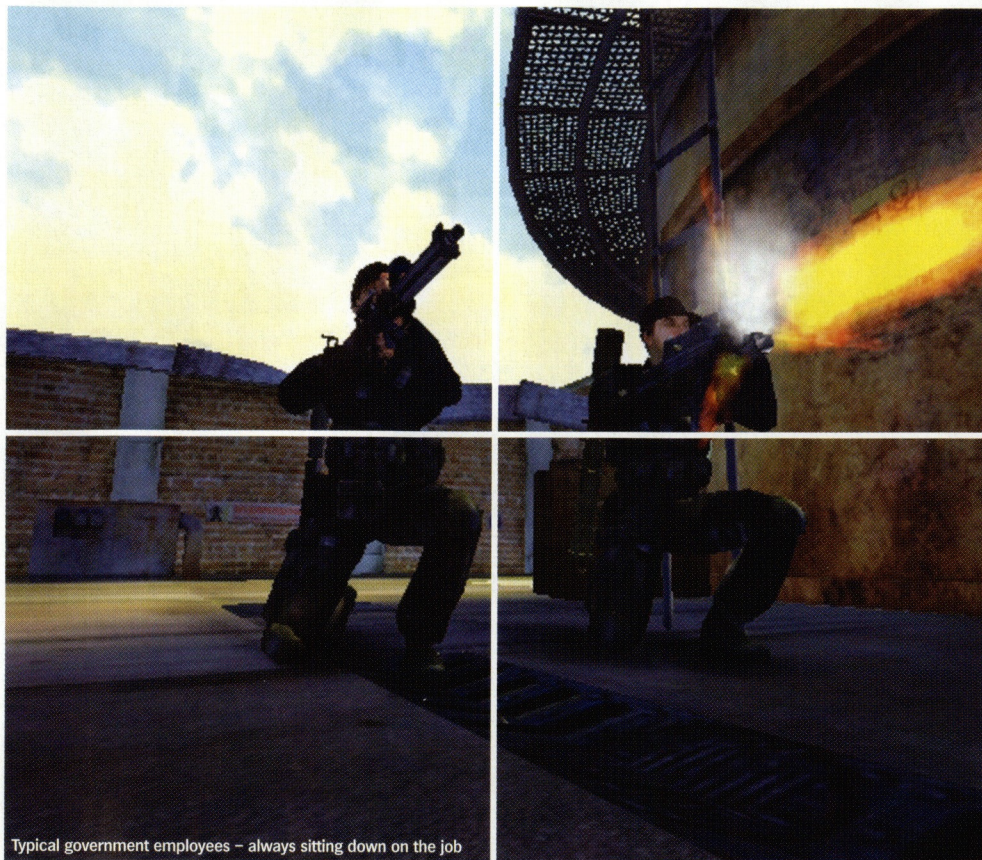
Access to weapons inventory and med packs is also much simpler than previous *Conflict* games, and there is never a need to pause the game as they can all be brought up on the fly. Weapons and med packs can be exchanged between teammates, and effective management of your supplies is crucial to ensure that you don't end up with one person having 13 med packs on one side of the map and

the other three people on the other side with none.

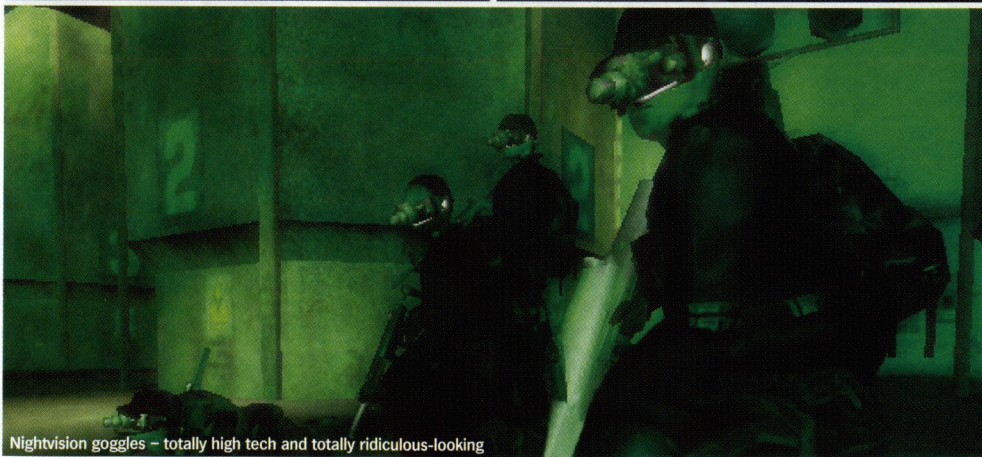
There's clearly been a lot of work put into the visuals of *Global Terror*, apparently the number of polygons in the character's backpacks alone is more than the total used for the entire character models in *Conflict: Vietnam*. Great looking backpacks might be enough for you luggage fetishists out there ("Zippers? Velcro? Special pouch for a mobile phone? Man, that's hot!"), but fortunately for the rest of us everything else also looks great too.

Not only do the environments look pretty this time; they're also much larger. Forget about the grass-covered hallways that you had to plod through in the previous game, *Global Terror* is all about giving you options in how you want to progress. There're always several paths you can choose from, making co-ordinated attacks all the more cerebral and enjoyable when you execute them effectively.

The biggest claim that the developers are making is that the enemy AI has been completely overhauled (see



Typical government employees – always sitting down on the job



Nightvision goggles – totally high tech and totally ridiculous-looking

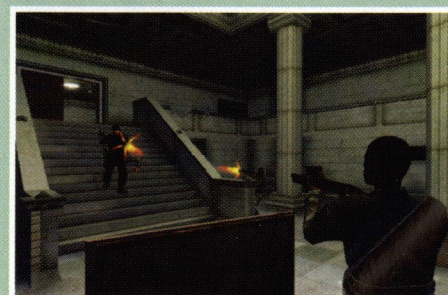
PULL THE PIN



Throwing grenades is a very streamlined affair in *Conflict: Global Terror*. Unlike the previous games in the series, and pretty much every other action shooter ever made, grenades go precisely where you aim the targeting reticule. For example you may come up against an enemy in a guard tower. Ordinarily you'd aim slightly higher to allow for gravity to take effect on your throw, but in *Global Terror* you just aim right at the enemy and the trajectory is calculated for you. It's a slight loss of realism, but it decreases the amount of time you have to spend out of cover so it's crucial for survival.

ALMOST TOO SMART

For the most part the enemies are pretty wily in *Conflict: Global Terror*. Basically any move you can do, they can do too. Enemies will take cover and peer out cautiously from behind crates and overturned tables, they'll throw smoke grenades to disorientate you and take you by surprise, and they'll hide and wait patiently for back up when you get them pinned down. Earlier on in the development, enemies were even able to heal other fallen enemies – but apparently it was just too confusing to the player, giving the illusion that you were fighting off an undead army *Resident Evil*-style.



'Almost Too Smart' box). During our playtest we noticed enemies take cover intelligently during a fight and also run for cover when they were injured.

The developers are also aiming to eliminate what they refer to as the "conga of death", which is the term used when enemy after enemy will come running through a doorway even after all the soldiers before him have been shot right there (sadly we'll never see it performed on *Dancing with the Stars*). It's a flaw that's plagued the majority of first and third-person shooters released and we're definitely keen to see it remedied, although from what we've seen so far there's still some work to go.

However, there's no knocking the teammate AI. Even when you're playing on your lonesome you're guaranteed a deep tactical experience thanks to the ease with which you can give orders, coupled with the quality of your teammates' own free will. The developers sought the help of specialist military advisors when creating the game, and

the results are evident with the formations your squad takes, the tactics they use and which weapons they employ in various situations.

Our only other reservation is the fact that the game is co-op and only co-op – there's no option for any form of adversarial mode (the closest you can get to a deathmatch is leaving friendly fire turned on in the options). For those who spell TEAM without an "I", *Global Terror* could be the game you've been waiting for. **Tristan Ogilvie**

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

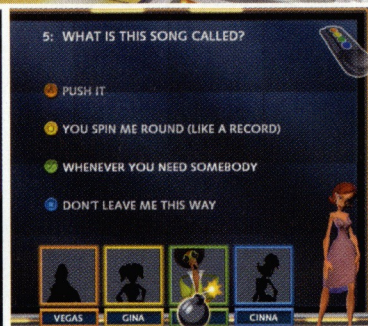
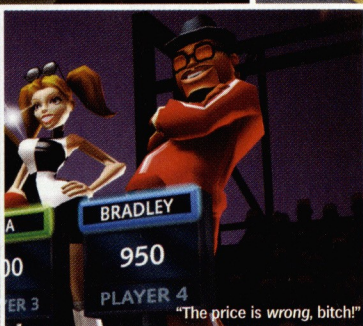
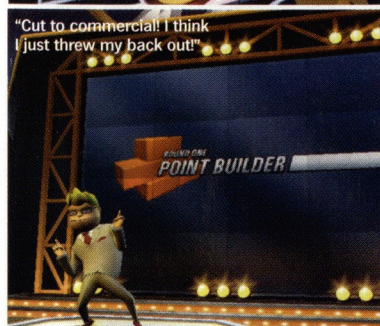
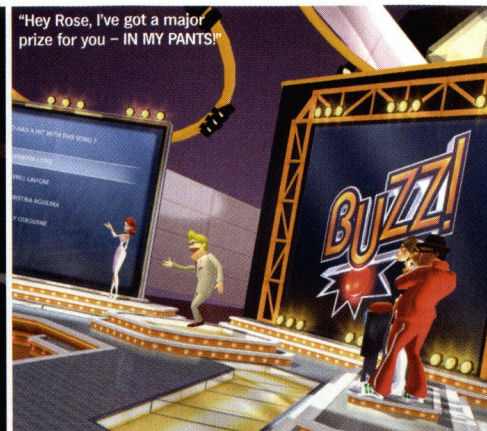
CONFLICT: GLOBAL TERROR should be viewed as the third game in the series, rather than the fourth. *Conflict: Vietnam* was a stumble, but with *Global Terror* the franchise seems to be back on track.



Pre-play

FUN FACT!

Developer Relentless Games was the same team behind the innovative and incredibly funky DJ: Decks & FX released on PS2 in 2004.



X PARTY

BUZZ: THE MUSIC QUIZ

Destined to become a carryover champ?

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: RELENTLESS SOFTWARE ■ WEB: www.playstation.com.au ■ LAST SEEN: OPS2 #42 ■ RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

Okay contestants, hands on your buzzers! What's the hottest new game show in town? *Deal or No Deal?* Incorrect. *Who wants to be a Millionaire?* You've got to be kidding. *The Price is Right?* Hmm, nubile models draped over shiny sports cars and clutching throbbing power tools – good! Larry Emdur – bad.

Seems like you won't be playing for the major prize, unless of course you answered, "Buzz", which is the incredibly addictive new music-based quiz game for PS2 – complete with unique game show buzzers that you use instead of controllers. Incidentally, we also would have accepted *Family Feud* (survey says "IT'S FREAKING AWESOME!").

The game is played out on a tacky game show set complete with a suitably cheesy host named Buzz (see 'Donovan's New Buzz' box), his sultry assistant Rose and up to four contestants. Players progress through a series of varying round types and test their musical knowledge, with more than 5,000 questions based on well over 1,000 music clips taken from several genres of popular music – from the fifties through to the present.

You can choose your on-screen character from 16 over-the-top contestants, including a fat Elvis look-alike, an aging Brit rocker and a ditty disco queen, and they each have individual taunt moves that you can use to really stick the boot into your opponent when they get an answer wrong (although

from our *Buzz* experience in *OPS2 Towers*, far more taunting occurs off-screen).

There are a number of round types in each 'episode' of *Buzz*. You start with 'Point Builder', which is a nice gentle beginning with basic multiple-choice questions, but you soon move on to more intense game types. 'Pass the Bomb' is a hot potato-style game where you need to answer a question correctly in order to pass the bomb to another contestant before the fuse burns out and it explodes, relieving them of a few points in the process. 'Fastest Finger' rewards the speed with which you can answer the question. The faster you answer, the more points you get.

'Point Stealer' is probably the nastiest round (and the round most likely to wear out your taunt button), as each correct answer grants you the opportunity to mercilessly strip points from another contestant of your choice (otherwise known in the *OPS2* office as 'Paul').

There are four buzzer controllers included with the game (you never even need to plug in a Dual Shock), and each controller has one large 'quick response' button plus four smaller colour coded buttons for the multiple-choice questions.

It's a simple system that anyone who's listened to music over the past 50 years can pick up and get into instantly. Like *SingStar* and the *EyeToy* games, we have a feeling that *Buzz* is going to become a massive ratings winner when it premieres on PS2 airwaves in October. **Tristan Ogilvie**

DONOVAN'S NEW BUZZ

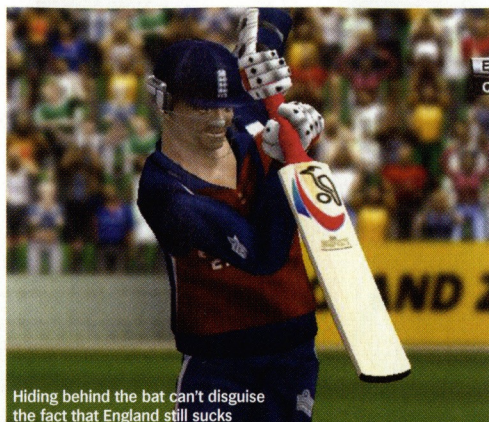
The last time we read about him in the newspaper he was staggering about in public enjoying a different kind of buzz, but it seems former *Neighbours* star and absolutely horrible singer Jason Donovan has pulled it together and is providing the voice of *Buzz*'s namesake host. Donovan actually does a pretty great job of it – in the sense that he's pretty much as smug as a game show host should be, and never hesitates to patronise you when you get a question wrong. Hey, at least they didn't get Craig McLachlan – that guy's about as funny as finding a band-aid in a Big Mac.



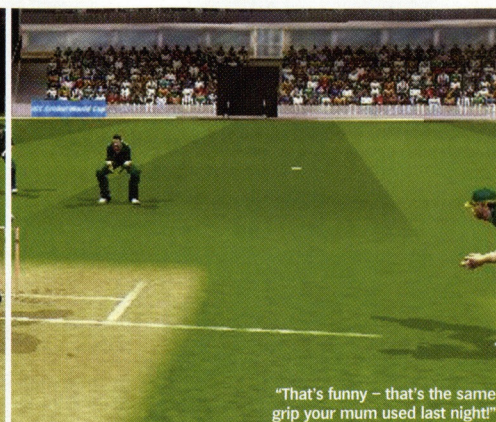
X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

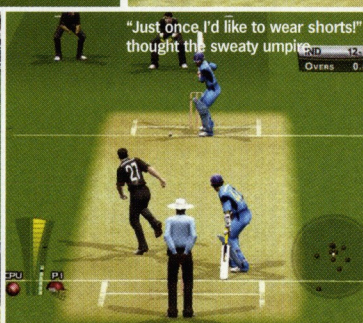
BUZZ is bound to be a hit; whether it's a family gathering at Christmas time or an after-the-pub get together with your mates. We're not sure how good the singleplayer will be, but who wants to play trivia against a computer anyway?



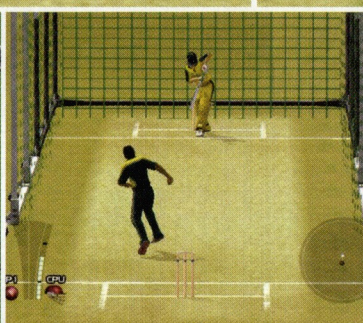
Hiding behind the bat can't disguise the fact that England still sucks



"That's funny – that's the same grip your mum used last night!"



"Just once I'd like to wear shorts!" thought the sweaty umpire



Brian Lara faced more balls than a shoeshiner at a nudist colony

X SPORTS

RICKY PONTING INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

Can it possibly be as good as it seems?

HANDS ON PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: SWORDFISH STUDIOS ■ WEB: www.codemasters.com ■ LAST SEEN: OPS2 #41 ■ RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

Some records in cricket will never be broken. Take, for example, the 16 match winning streak that Steve Waugh's Australian team enjoyed from 1999 to 2001. Or Boonie's 52 tinnies on the flight to London in 1989 – you just can't replicate that level of athleticism.

But it looks like *Shane Warne Cricket '99* may finally be coming to the end of its run as the king of cricket videogames. And it's only fair that its long awaited sequel, *Ricky Ponting International Cricket 2005*, is the game dethroning it.

RPIC2005 has got the OPS2 team more tragic about cricket than a tracksuit-clad, light beer-sipping Johnny Howard on Boxing Day. Luke's been enthusiastically gripping the bat with both hands (even when he's fielding) and if Paul spends any more time polishing a ball on his inner thigh he may very well go blind.

Unlike EA Sports' three PS2 efforts, the cricket in *RPIC2005* is genuinely entertaining from the get go. Who really gives a full toss how many teams, players or tournaments there is when the actual on-field experience is a secondary feature?

Think of *RPIC2005* as the *Pro Evo* of cricket games – it just completely nails the gameplay. Batting is uncomplicated and intuitive, while bowling is difficult enough without becoming frustrating. Even fielding is simple and fun – the movement of the fielders is automatic but catches and return throws are affected

with a golf-style swing timer, ensuring that you can never go to sleep when you're the bowling side.

Unfortunately the preview version of the game we've been playing hasn't had the commentary added yet, so we can only wonder how atmospheric it's going to be having multiple commentary teams including David Gower, Jonathon Agnew, Tony Greig and the great Bill Laurie. But otherwise the presentation features are spot on (see 'Hawkeye View' box).

Our only concern so far is that singleplayer matches seem slightly dull – the AI is far too predictable when batting and will continue to push singles even when it needs 10 runs off the last over, for example. But we have faith that this flaw will be remedied, considering how well designed the multiplayer mode is.

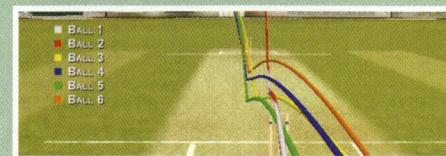
At this stage *RPIC2005* seems more attractive than a streaking Swedish supermodel and looks certain to become the must have game in any cricket fans' kit bag. Hardcore fans will probably have already picked up EA's *Cricket 2005*, but out of the two *RPIC2005* looks to have the inside edge. **Tristan Ogilvie**

FUN FACT!

There are 39 different types of bat in *RPIC2005*, from licensed manufacturers including Duncan Fearnley, Gun and Moore, Kookaburra, Gray Nicholls and Slazenger.

HAWKEYE VIEW

We have no idea exactly how it works, but there's no doubt that Hawkeye technology has become an integral part of cricket matches broadcasted on television. Like in the real thing, Hawkeye in *RPIC2005* isn't just used to mull over dubious LBW decisions, it's also used to show the path of the deliveries at the end of an over, where each ball pitched, along with the 3D runs-scored wagon wheel. The Hawkeye technology has been officially licensed from its real life creators, so you can guarantee that's it's truly accurate and authentic.



X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

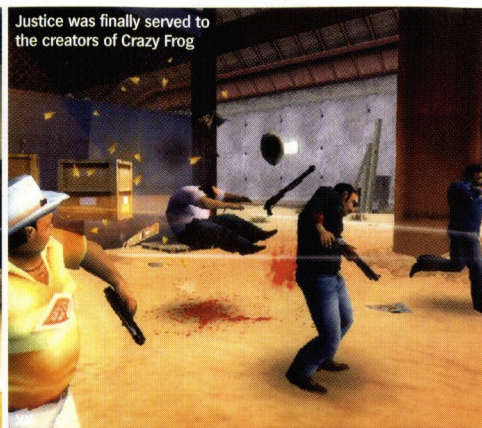
RPIC2005 is shaping up to be a true cricketing all-rounder. While it can't stand up to *Cricket 2005* in terms of teams and tournaments, it's certainly got the wood over it when it comes to fun.



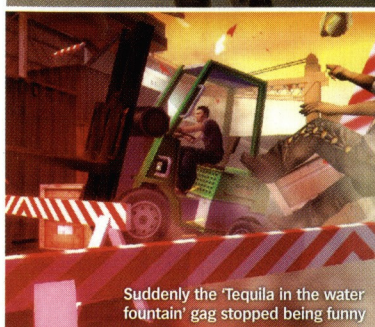
Pre-play



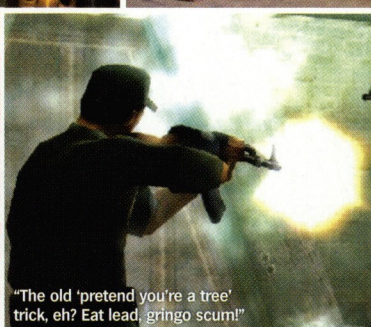
Think she's hot now? You should see her with her gloves off!



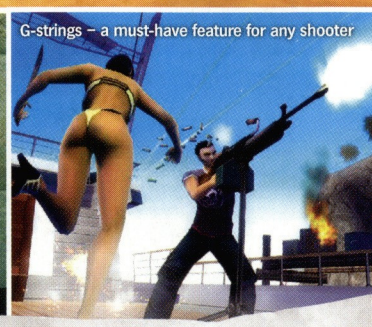
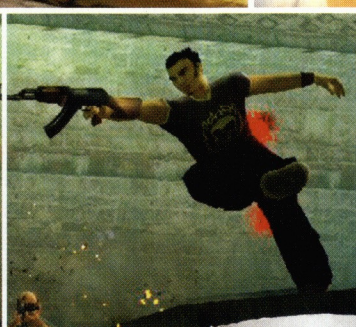
Justice was finally served to the creators of Crazy Frog



Suddenly the 'Tequila in the water fountain' gag stopped being funny



"The old 'pretend you're a tree' trick, eh? Eat lead, gringo scum!"



G-strings – a must-have feature for any shooter

X ACTION

TOTAL OVERDOSE

Bullet time, tequila and explosive piñatas? Adios, boredom!

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 ■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI ■ **DEVELOPER:** DEADLINE GAMES ■ **WEB:** www.totaloverdose.com ■ **LAST SEEN:** OPS2 #40 ■ **RELEASE DATE:** SEPTEMBER

It would be easy to hate bullet time – without it the first *Matrix* film might not have been successful enough to attract the investment needed to produce the two abominable sequels. And the Wachowskis might still be brothers rather than brother and sister (or possibly even sisters? Our latest issue of *NW* magazine is late in the mail).

But it's certainly spiced up a number of videogames, namely the *Max Payne* series and the action-packed slow-mo shootouts in Activision's *True Crime*. It's also at the forefront of the upcoming blast-'em-up *Total Overdose*, from developer Deadline Games.

Total Overdose is intended to be the *Tony Hawk* of the action genre. It's designed to be the enemy of stealth; rather than sneak about behind crates and gradually pick off enemies one by one, *Total Overdose* encourages gamers to indulge in a non-stop orgy of cartoon violence, building up brutal combos of headshots, *Matrix* lobby sequence-style wall flips and dual-wielded death and destruction.

With each enemy you dispose of you get a time bonus added to your combo metre, and so you constantly find yourself frantically searching for your next victim-in-waiting before your time runs out. According to the developers, each Mexico-based level in the game can be completed with one long combo – although you're going to have to spend a lot of time in the shade of a Sombrero to get that good.

Pulling off particularly long combos grants you special 'Loco' weapons or abilities that you can then use to take your combos to the next level. These range from El Mariachi-style machine gun guitar cases to psychopathic Mexican wrestlers that fight alongside you. But our favourite Loco move at the moment is undoubtedly the piñata; which you throw into a cluster of enemies, who then proceed to gather excitedly around it and giggle like Hispanic Homer Simpsons – before it detonates suddenly in their faces. Bet they didn't see that coming!

The arid landscapes of *Total Overdose* are also full of vehicles to drive. In our time with the game we've driven everything from station wagons to tractors to petrol tankers, and what's interesting is how you can incorporate vehicles into your combos. For example, you can drive at full speed into an enemy roadblock, launch out of the door at the last minute and straight into a bullet time shoot-dodge move to clean up any enemies that weren't incinerated by your explosive bomb on wheels.

And that's really the point of *Total Overdose*. There are never any boring trips from one side of a large map to the other before a mission. As long as you're alive, you're in a gunfight – either on foot or on wheels. For those who like their action hotter than Jennifer Lopez wearing nothing but a strategically placed taco, *Total Overdose* could well be the Tabasco flavoured tonic you need. **Tristan Ogilvie**

FUN FACT!

Developer Deadline Games is based in Denmark. Sadly the idea we pitched for 'Princess Mary – The Game' was met with a firm "Sorry, we do not speak the English".

THE SANDS OF TIME

During *Total Overdose* you always have a limited number of 'rewinds', ala the Sands of Time in *Prince of Persia*. Rewinds can be used to bring you back from the dead (complete with a handy boost to your health), and they can also be used if you muck up a combo. So if the clock's ticking and you notice too late that there's an enemy on top of a water tower behind you, you can rewind time to add precious seconds to your combo meter and take him out with your sniper rifle. We even used a 'rewind' when we accidentally swallowed the worm at the bottom of our Tequila bottle. It wasn't pretty.



X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

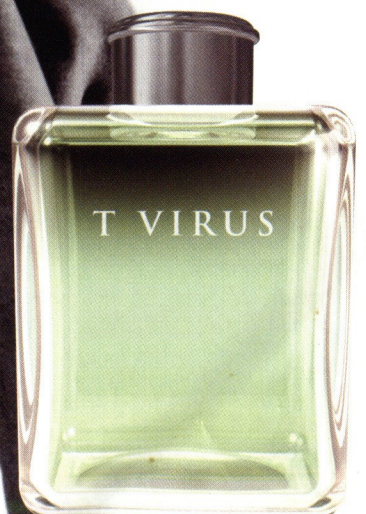
TOTAL OVERDOSE injects a mainline of spicy fun directly into your central nervous system. It's shaping up to be exactly what a great videogame should be – easy to pick up and impossible to put down. Muy loco, muchachos!

NECRO CHIC

BY CAPCOM

A beautiful way to become infected, alone or with others

RESIDENT EVIL™
OUTBREAK
FILE #2



PlayStation®2

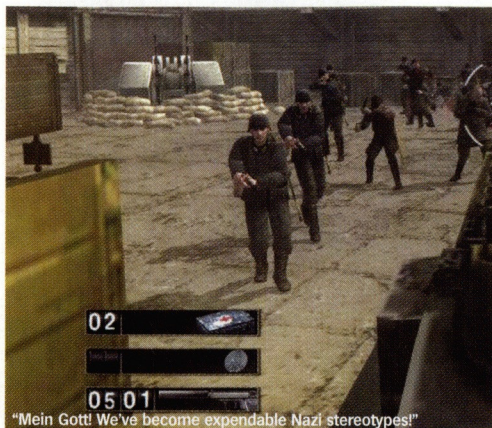
WITH NET PLAY

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CAPCOM
res-evil.com

Pre-play



✖ FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

FUN FACT!
'Commando' comes from the Portuguese and was adopted by the Afrikaners in the Boer War. It was revived in WWII with the formation of British and Australian commando units.

COMMANDOS STRIKE FORCE

Go commando without removing your undies!

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-8 (ONLINE) ■ DISTRIBUTOR: EIDOS ■ DEVELOPER: PYRO STUDIOS ■ WEB: www.commandosstrikeforce.com ■ LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK ■ RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

Top-down, 2D real-time strategy games generally have fairly niche appeal, so you'd expect the follow-up to *Commandos 2: Men of Courage*, a top-down 2D real-time strategy game, to have that same appeal. *Commandos Strike Force*, however, is quite a different beast to its predecessor.

Okay, so World War II first-person shooters aren't exactly thin on the ground at the moment. In fact, occupied Europe is a little like Paul's ex-girlfriend's place – everyone's been there. However, with cracks starting to appear in the *Medal of Honor* series, now is the perfect time for this strike force to, er... strike.

CSF may be going where many have gone before but because of its heritage as a strategy game, it does boast a duffle bag full of features that traditional WWII shooters lack.

Over the course of *CSF* you'll be controlling three different characters – a sniper, a Green Beret and a spy. Each one has unique abilities that you'll need to exploit if you want to make it through the three campaigns alive. The spy can utilise disguises taken from smoked Nazis and infiltrate enemy installations, the sniper has the capacity to temporally bring time to a crawl by holding his breath (allowing you to ventilate Fritz in slow-motion) and the Green Beret is a hard-case who can double his firepower by dual wielding two weapons at once.

Missions will either involve one of these three characters or a combination of two of them – with the ability to swap between them at will. For instance, one mission we played involved defending a bridge against German troops and armour. Using the Green Beret we set mines on the bridge and held off troops using a mounted machine gun. However, the area came under mortar attack, so we switched to the sniper who we then positioned in a building overlooking the river and served the mortar spotter with a lead sandwich. In the meantime, the Green Beret defended himself. It's moments like these that will make *CSF* a far more cerebral shooter than the likes of the *Medal of Honor: European Assault*.

It'll also be far less linear than similar WWII shooters. There are multiple ways to complete objectives – you just need to choose the right method. Missions will take place across France, Norway and Russia and will vary from defence, stealth, demolition and a host of others.

CSF will feature some suitably gritty graphics, great rag-doll physics, a handy mini-map that indicates enemies and their state of alertness, and an exceptionally rousing score from the Bratislavan Symphony Orchestra (who else?). It'll also ship with eight-player online multiplayer (but unfortunately no co-op mode at this point). All the elements are there for a great shooter, and we can't wait to start going commando later this year. In fact, some of us already are... **— Luke Reilly**

"NAZIS... I HATE THESE GUYS"

OPS2 caught up with *Commandos Strike Force's* executive producer Michael Souto for a quick interrogation.

OPS2: Has there been any concern about alienating fans of the original *Commandos* by changing to a first-person shooter?

MS: I think there will definitely be people who say, "I cannot believe that you have done this to my favourite game." But, there'll also be those who say, "This is what I always wanted to play *Commandos* like." When *Commandos* originally came out, *Hidden and Dangerous* came out shortly after that, and everyone went, "Wow, it's like *Commandos* 3D – this is exactly what we wanted to play."

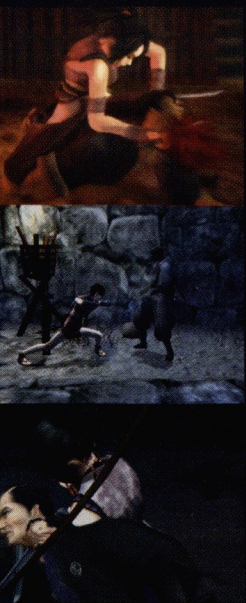
OPS2: Where would you rank Nazis in the pantheon of videogame enemies? Are they above zombies?

MS: Oh, easily above zombies – zombies are mindless. Nazis are just the proper evil, aren't they? The amount of people that were killed by the Nazis – they are the classic bad guys. When you see any kind of baddies in games, they really don't compare with the feeling you get from seeing the Nazis – just a genuine loathing.

✖ PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

80%

COMMANDOS STRIKE FORCE may be one of many WWII shooters to grace the PS2, but there'll be plenty here to accommodate even the fussiest FPS pundits. Looking very intelligent and particularly deep.

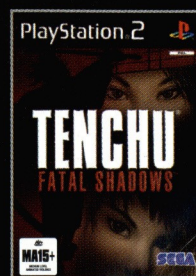


Two warriors, united by destiny. One fights for honour, one for vengeance, and both must use stealth, cunning and their deadly Ninja fighting skills to reach their goal, in this new chapter of the Tenchu epic.

- New multi-kill stealth moves allow you to dispatch two enemies at once
- Two playable characters – returning heroine Ayame and newcomer Rin – each with unique fighting styles
- Cutting-edge graphics – the Tenchu world has never looked so good
- Drag bodies, breathe under water and use your arsenal of Ninja weapons to ensure you are never seen

Death never looked so good.

Coming May 27



PlayStation 2

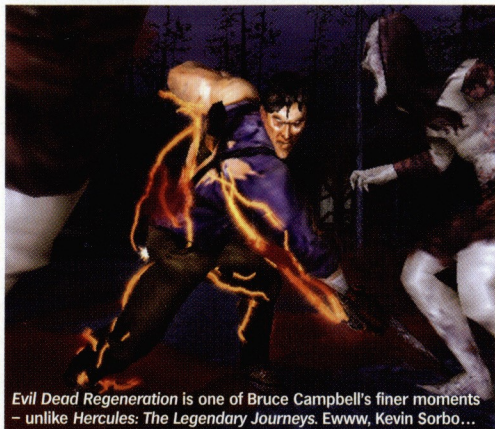
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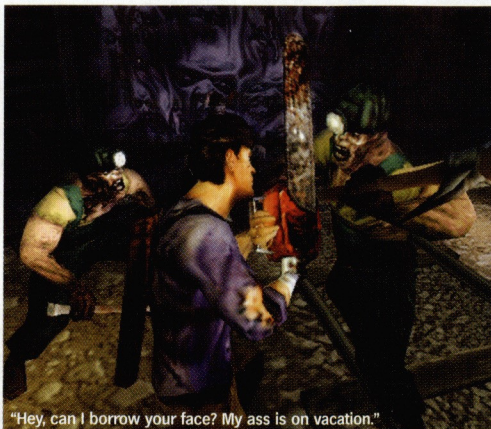
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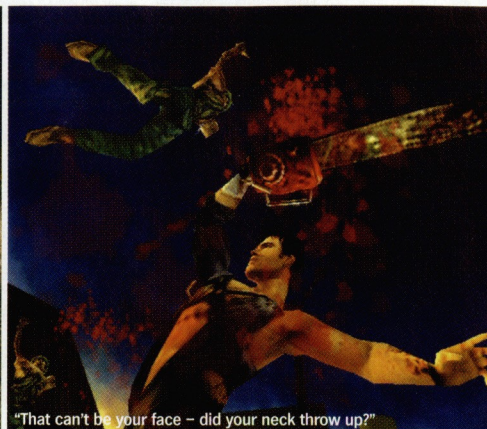
Pre-play



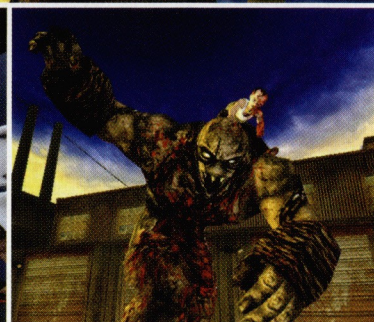
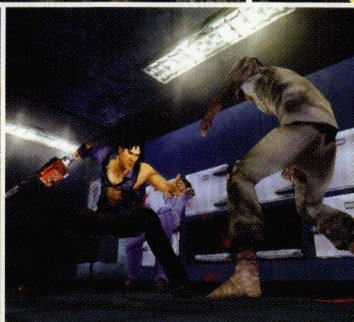
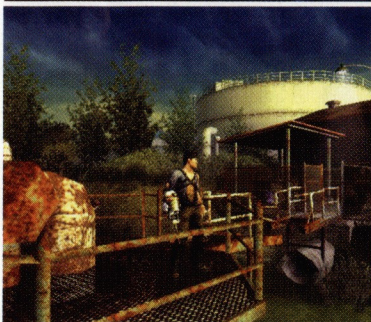
Evil Dead Regeneration is one of Bruce Campbell's finer moments – unlike *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*. Ewww, Kevin Sorbo...



"Hey, can I borrow your face? My ass is on vacation."



"That can't be your face – did your neck throw up?"



× ACTION/ADVENTURE

EVIL DEAD REGENERATION

Who wants some?

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: CRANKY PANTS ■ WEB: www.evildead3.com ■ LAST SEEN: OPS2 #43 ■ RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

When the world's going to hell in a hand basket who can you turn to? Constantine? That guy smokes like a chimney (and he has a sissy name). Who said Superman? Get outside – we'll see you after class. The Ghostbusters? Okay, that was a good answer Bill, but can somebody take Mr. Murray outside. Come on, everyone knows that when the undead come knocking there's only one man for the job – Ash.

With a chainsaw in one hand and a boomstick in the other, the wisecracking hero of the *Evil Dead* franchise is a rare breed these days – tough as nails with an amazing capacity to laugh while literally staring undeath in the face. He's perfect videogame fodder.

The good news for deadites everywhere is that after two slightly lacklustre attempts on Sony consoles, THQ looks like it has finally nailed an *Evil Dead* game that works. While Ash's last PS2 outing, *A Fistful of Boomstick*, was set after the three *Evil Dead* films, *Evil Dead Regeneration* is being described as the spiritual successor to *Evil Dead 2*.

Ash is arrested, convicted of murder and sent to Sunny Meadows, an institute for the criminally insane. However, deep in the basement the mad Dr. Vingo is working to harness the Necronomicon, the Book of the Dead, and its supernatural powers. Bad idea.

Voiced again by B-movie legend Bruce Campbell (whose latest book *Make Love the Bruce Campbell Way* is on high rotation in *OPS2 Towers*), Ash is back to slice 'em up first, ask questions later – you know, the usual.

Ash will have a variety of weapons at his disposal, including his trusty 12-gauge, pistols, flame throwers, and of course, his beloved chainsaw. *Regeneration* has a solid combat system for Ash to dispatch the waves of deadites he encounters, with a variety of combos to master and plenty of gory finishing moves. We never get sick of the kick to balls, reverse shotgun-to-the-face finisher. Works every time.

Ash can also transform into Evil Ash by building up a special rage meter, which makes turning deadites into intestine casserole a breeze.

Regeneration also introduces a new sidekick for Ash – a three-foot-tall invulnerable deadite called Sam. Voiced by Ivan Raimi, brother of Sam "Spider-Man" Raimi, Sam is a valuable tool for Ash to dispatch the undead hordes – you can kick him at enemies like a football and even set him alight like a torch.

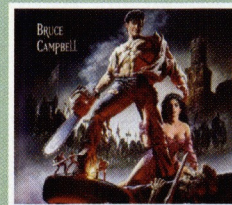
After some hands-on time with the game we can tell you everything about it is better than it's predecessor. The dialogue and most of the sound effects seem spot-on at this point, but some of the weapon sounds could do with a little work – Ash's arsenal could sound a little meatier if you ask us.

We're having plenty of fun with the preview version – Naz has been walking around the office shouting, "This is my BOOMSTICK!" all week (which is curious, because he hasn't actually played *Evil Dead Regeneration* yet – weird). ♫ Luke Reilly

"GIMME SOME SUGAR BABY!"

Tune in next issue for an exclusive OPS2 interview with B-movie god, best-selling author, *Evil Dead* legend and all 'round nice guy, Bruce Campbell!

CLASSIC CAMPBELL



Ash returns from the past after defeating the Army of Darkness in er... *Army of Darkness*, but he's sprung by possessed woman after returning to work at S-Mart.

Ash: Lady, I'm afraid I'm gonna have to ask you to leave the store.

Possessed Woman: Who the hell are you?

Ash: Name's Ash. [cocks shotgun] Housewares.

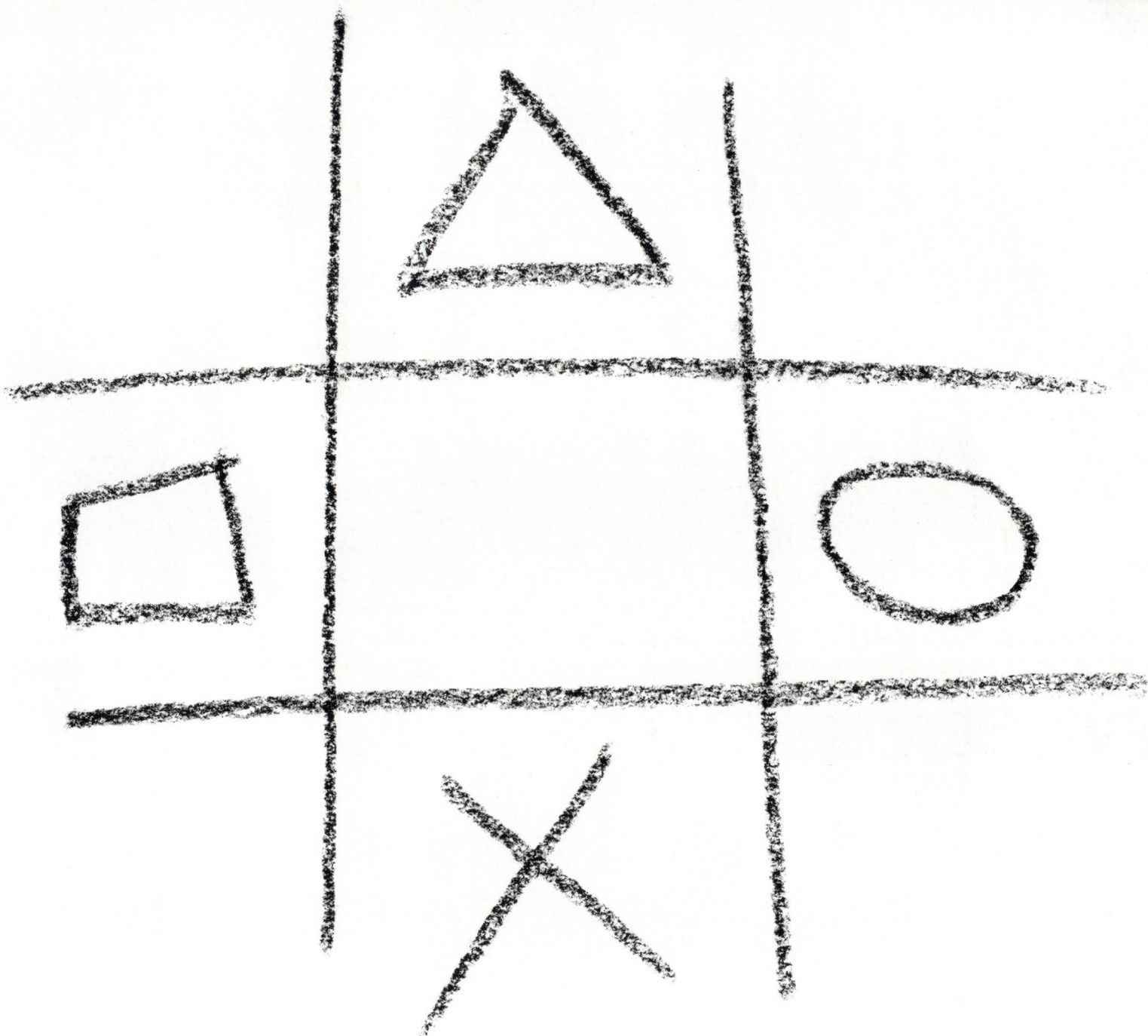
[Ash terminates the Possessed Woman with extreme prejudice]

Ash: [narrating] Sure, I could have stayed in the past. I could have even been king. But in my own way, I am king. [Ash grabs a sexy female shop assistant] Hail to the king, baby. [cue pash]

× PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

EVIL DEAD REGENERATION should be the *Evil Dead* game fans have wanted all along. Great presentation, solid combat and *Evil Dead's* trademark irreverence.



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TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN

WORDS: TRISTAN OGILVIE

The biggest of all beasts is lumbering towards cinema screens this Christmas, and we've found out how Ubisoft's *King Kong* game goes far beyond simply recreating the events of the film; in fact it's an inspiringly innovative interpretation.

Without question, King Kong is one of the most iconic characters in the history of cinema. Even if you're not old enough to remember the original film, odds are that you've been exposed to enough pop culture that the very mention of his name

invokes an image in your mind of a gigantic gorilla lumbering up the side of the Empire State building, swatting away pesky aircraft with one hulking hand and clutching a petrified girl tightly in the other.

But has he ever been that terrifying? To most he's probably nothing more than a big clumsy cartoon character. However that conception is about to be violently razed into the earth by the brand new *King Kong* movie remake.

Directed by Peter Jackson, fresh from editing Director's Cut number 37 of his record breaking *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the new film will see the epic-sized ape transformed from black and white bogeyman to an imposing and vividly believable monster. And to coincide unsurprisingly with the theatrical release of the film at the end of this year, Ubisoft is recreating the new adventure for both the PS2 and PSP.

NOT ANOTHER MOVIE TIE-IN

But wait! Before you roll your eyes and reach for the remote, know that *King Kong* is a movie conversion unlike any other before it (also, *OPS2* is in fact a magazine and not your television set). *King Kong* is flexing its muscle and busting out of the usually restrictive ties that bind a licensed game to its celluloid origins, and though the characters and settings may be mostly the same as those in the film, there's nevertheless a truly

unique experience to be had in the interactive version of the story.

OPS2 travelled to Ubisoft's Montpellier studio in the South of France to meet the developers and to have some hands-on time with the game, which has progressed nicely from the stunning handful of levels we saw at this year's E3. The Montpellier studio is certainly not your average development house; it's a rustic old building rather than the usual sterile looking office block, but then again the members of the *King Kong* team are far from your average developers (see page 36 for our one on one with *King Kong* producer Michel Ancel).

If you read the *Batman Begins* review in last month's issue, you'll know just exactly how movie conversions shouldn't be handled. Linear level design, handholding and an abundance of cutscenes lifted directly from the film version don't really offer a tantalising incentive over just watching the film itself; it's certainly cheaper and takes a lot less of your time.

But so far *King Kong* is exhibiting none of those trappings. While ultimately the storyline is still linear, in so far as it has a predetermined beginning and ending, how you get from one to the other is entirely up to you.

THE LOST WORLD

Carl Denham (Jack Black) is a 1930's filmmaker who travels to a mysterious island to use as the location for an epic feature film. However when the natives kidnap his leading lady Ann Darrow (Naomi Watts) and her love interest Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody), Denham quickly realises he is getting much more than he bargained for, in the form of thoroughly terrifying prehistoric predators.

The game begins with you, Jack Driscoll, waking up to find yourself tethered to a post. You're unable to move, and can only look on as

Ann is lowered from a primitive wooden crane onto a platform 50 feet in the air. Around you a throbbing tribal rhythm gradually builds into a frenzied crescendo, before abruptly subsiding into an eerie silence. Then the ominous sound of earth-shaking footsteps signal the arrival of the awesome King Kong, as he emerges out of the jungle to claim his offering; snatching Ann from her inescapable platform, pausing to let out a truly guttural roar and then plodding off into the fog – a giant gorilla in the mist.

Shortly after you are set free by Denham and must flee the natives, and it's here that the game begins for real.

King Kong has a level of intensity that is comparable to that of *Resident Evil 4*, and we think you know by now just how excited we are about the upcoming Capcom game (Naz had 'RE4 4 EVA' tattooed on his left buttock – and that was only after he had to get expensive laser surgery to remove the questionable picture of the unicorn jumping over a rainbow). Enemies are relentless, and ammunition for firearms is in short supply so you'll spend a lot of time scrambling to find tools within the environment to defend yourself from the truly primal forms of evil.

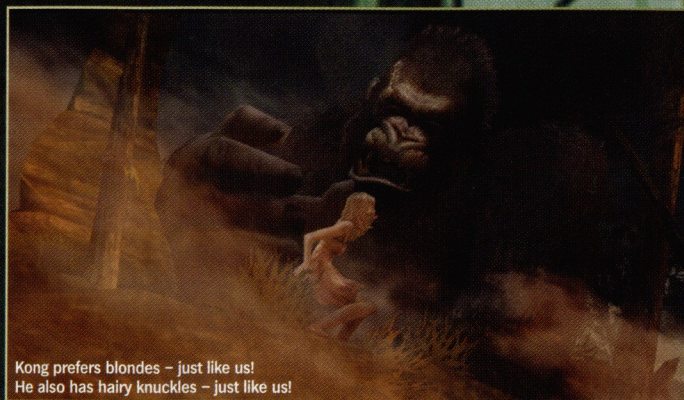
As you endeavour to leave the native village you come upon your first obstacle, a large wooden gate that can only be opened by two people. The trouble is, Dunham is pinned down in a cave by a hungry Velociraptor, and it's here that you get your first taste of the gameplay choices that populate the *King Kong* experience.

For example you might choose to grab a spear and take your chances with a head-to-head fight with the Raptor. Alternatively you might ignite the end of your spear and then hurl it at the grass near the Raptor's feet, setting the whole area alight and driving the prehistoric beast into a retreat. You





"C'mon boys. I've got an appetite for some T-Rex t-bone!"



Kong prefers blondes – just like us!
He also has hairy knuckles – just like us!



"Oh, who am I kidding? The boathouse was the time to tell him!"



could even skewer a small lizard and use it as bait to lure the Raptor away, freeing up Denham to grab a sharp bone from a nearby carcass and take the menacing enemy by surprise.

Denham is just one of a handful of non-playable characters that accompany you at times and help you out (although keeping with his character, he's often distracted in trying to film the breathtaking beasts rather than attempting to combat them). None of it is scripted, and all of the AI-controlled characters will react to random events, whether it's providing cover fire when you're struggling to reload or dragging other wounded characters to safety when they fall into harm's way.

BE THE BEAST

But Driscoll isn't the only character you get to play as. For about 40 per cent of the game you will also control Kong himself, and at these points the camera switches from a first-person view to a third-person perspective. Controlling Kong is much simpler than Driscoll, and the basic jumps, punches and grab moves combine to accentuate the feeling of being near invincible [see 'Primal Rage'].

The Kong levels are also interesting as they introduce an evolving relationship between the massive beast and his tiny female companion (who you're trying to rescue, as Driscoll – talk about a bizarre love triangle!). You carry Ann at all times, but as she is in one of your hands you are restricted in combat and must often put her down when you have to crack some T-Rex skulls.

As she is initially afraid of Kong, when you drop her she will run hysterically and usually end up in more trouble. But over time and through a series of pivotal plot points she learns to trust Kong, and from then on she will ride comfortably

your shoulder, which allows you to perform all of your attacks without putting her down. Then if you do drop her she will hide intelligently from other predators. There'll even be *Ico* style moments where she'll help you by activating door mechanisms to open gates blocking your path.

Ann also helps Driscoll at times. At one point early on in the game, Ann manages to escape Kong and heads along the path of a large, twisting tree branch. However she is surprised by some hungry dinosaurs, and as Driscoll you must hold them off with your pistol from the safety of the ground below. Eventually the dinosaurs leap down to attack you, and so the situation is totally reversed as Ann begins to throw spears down for your protection.

KONG'S KINGDOM

It's not just the characters that keep the game interesting; it's the stunningly realised environments as well. Working closely with Peter Jackson's production company WETA Digital, Ubisoft has taken production artwork and concept sketches and brought them to life with a sublime combination of visual effects and earthy soundscapes.

The jungle environments are rich with various types of exotic foliage. Waterfalls cascade down jagged rock walls. Embers glide erratically through plumes of smoke spiralling above naked flames. At all times you are reminded that you are a feeble human lost in a primitive world, which in turn contributes to the overall feeling of desperation.

Visual effects are also used to enhance sounds. When a T-Rex first announces its presence by chomping on one of your allies on a bridge high above the ground, its ensuing roar of triumph is accented by a convulsive visual effect; a momentary blur that ripples through your field of

vision and straight down your spine.

The game's immersion is aided by the fact that there is no Heads-Up Display (HUD) of any kind. There's no health bar, no radar, no ammunition indicator – you view the world of *King Kong* unobstructed and exactly as you would in real life. You can also only carry two weapons at once, a firearm and a melee weapon such as a spear, so there's no inventory screen. In fact the only reason you ever need to bring up any form of onscreen menu is to load or save your game.

Unlike any other first-person shooter, you don't even have a gun jutting out of the bottom right of the screen at all times. Instead you must hold L2 to raise your weapon and then L1 to zoom in and R1 to fire. Again it's a small touch but it does wonders for the realism of the game – just who runs around with their gun stretched out in front of their face anyway?

As there is no onscreen indication, health is handled in a very basic manner. When you get hit while controlling Driscoll, the screen will turn a tinge of red and your heart rate will jump to an audible rate. This vulnerable state lasts for around ten seconds, but if you get hit again before that time is up you are finished. In the words of the developers themselves, it's a *Super Mario Bros* style system, similar to the moustachioed mascot's habit of going from big to small to death. Regardless, it once again emphasises how futile the humans are in comparison to their extremely dangerous predators.

The only problem that we have with this system at the moment is that, as Kong, there was no apparent indication of how damaged he was during our hands-on with the early build of the game. We're not sure if that means that Kong actually is

invincible, so we'll be interested to see how the developers end up handling it.

CHEST BEATING

But just like the attractive Ann we don't want to be scooped up by *King Kong* and get carried away; the game has still got a few months of development to go and there's still plenty more coming that we haven't seen yet. Though the one Kong level we've played so far was a lot of destructive fun, we're a little wary how the developers are going to sustain that fun without the action becoming a bit repetitive – after all it's not like Kong can upgrade to a rocket launcher or learn devastating new attack combos. But for now we'll have to put faith in the relationship mechanic between Kong and Ann having a larger influence on the gameplay than what we've seen so far.

We're also concerned about the enemy intelligence. While it's certainly a terrifying experience being chased by a T-Rex or being darted at by giant vampire bats, we can't help but wonder if there will be any intelligent human enemies to try and outsmart. When we put the question to a number of Ubisoft representatives we were met with mixed responses; some indicated that there could possibly be island natives to combat while others categorically denied the presence of any human opponents in the game. So for that answer we'll just have to wait and see.

But at the same time there's just so much to look forward to. We've only been exposed to a handful of levels on the island, but there have already been a number of *Jurassic Park* style 'cup of water on the dashboard' wow moments. At one point as Driscoll you find yourself edging your way through a narrow crevice. All of a

sudden you notice mini-landslides of rock and dust tumbling down the rock walls. You emerge into daylight with you heart in your mouth to see a herd of monolithic Brontosaurus' stampeding through a shallow stream in a valley. It's a truly overwhelming sight.

And let's not forget that the story progresses to New York City, an environment that we've seen absolutely nothing of in-game so far and one that will obviously provide a massive contrast to the jungle locations that make up the first portion of the game. We're not even sure if you'll get to play as Kong in that infamous Empire State sequence or as Driscoll down on the streets below (although from what we managed to dig out of the Ubisoft guys; you'll most likely get to play as both characters in the city locations).

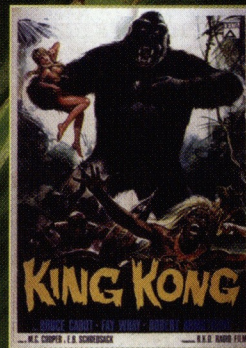
One thing we can be certain of is that if the entire *King Kong* experience is as relentlessly intense as the handful of levels we've played so far, then gamers are in for an adventure that for the first time, for as long as we can remember, really does go beyond the looks and sounds inherited from its movie inspiration. You won't be living in someone else's predetermined footsteps, and the emotions you experience while playing the game will be entirely born out of your own fear and panic. Add to that character interaction that is always relative to the situation, and the relationship of trust that must be built up between Ann and Kong, and we're set for a virtual experience that could possibly feel more human than the live action film. Through the hard work of the developers at Ubisoft, and their partnership with Peter Jackson and WETA Digital, the legend of *King Kong* is going from the cinematic reel to just plain real. **B**



Childish Kong was reluctant to share his Barbie



ORIGIN OF KONG



The original *King Kong* film, released in 1933, will go down in history as being one of the greatest adventure films ever produced and has spawned a number of sequels including *King Kong* vs. *Godzilla* (1962), *King Kong Escapes* (1967) and *King Kong Lives* (1986). Surprisingly

the model used for Kong in the original film was in actual fact a less than imposing 18 inches tall, and the classic Kong roar was achieved by combining a lion's and a tiger's roar and running them backwards. The idea for movie apparently originated in a dream that director Merian C. Cooper had about a giant gorilla attacking New York City (we had a similar dream once, only replace 'a giant gorilla' with 'Cameron Diaz' and 'New York City' with 'our pants').

PRIMAL RAGE



From what we've seen so far, Kong's levels play out like a jungle-themed WWE wrestling match. Kong has basic punches, backhand slaps and grappling manoeuvres such as headlocks, and can even climb up vine-covered walls to deliver body slams – just like jumping off the top rope. Like Driscoll, Kong can also make use of lesser enemies when taking on bigger ones. At one point during our hands-on Kong snared a bat out of the sky, threw it at a T-Rex who chomped on it instinctively like a dog catching a Frisbee, allowing Kong to deliver a brutal right hook before recreating a REACH toothbrush commercial on the distracted dinosaur's face. **SNAP!**



KING OF KONG



Michel Ancel and a T-Rex. (Ancel's the one on the left by the way)

Michel Ancel, producer of the *King Kong* videogame, is best known for creating the *Rayman* series, an incredibly popular franchise that has sold more than 10 million copies around the world. His last project was *Beyond Good & Evil*, which was a universal success with the critics but underperformed sales-wise, unable to compete with established franchises and high profile licensed titles. Ancel is unlikely to have that same problem with *King Kong*.

OPS2: *Beyond Good & Evil* received critical acclaim around the world. Were you frustrated with the relatively meagre sales it achieved?

Michel Ancel: In fact, it would have been really frustrating if the game had been badly perceived

by the gamers. I think that the people who actually played the game really enjoyed it, and so we got the feeling that it was a really great achievement because of that. You know, sometimes if you work on a project for four years and after that the result is not good – that would have been much harder to take. We have 30,000 people who subscribe to the *Beyond Good & Evil* website in France alone, which is three times more than the number for the *Rayman* site, which is a game that outsold *Beyond Good & Evil* by a long margin. So that suggests that *BG&E* has achieved a cult following, so we're still very pleased with that.

OPS2: In contrast to *BG&E*, *King Kong* is destined to have maximum exposure and a very good chance at commercial success as it will have a blockbuster movie behind it. Are you concerned about the stigma attached to movie tie-ins, and the fact that gamers perceive them to be of lower quality than non-licensed games?

Ancel: I think you'll agree that those preconceptions go out the door as soon as you start playing *King Kong*. I think because we've worked on the game for two years, and because we've worked so closely with WETA Digital and Peter Jackson, the finished game is going to be of a very high quality. The game has definitely benefited by the involvement of the moviemakers. For the player, it's good value because you've got all new dialogue written specifically for the game and voiced by all the film actors, there's no cutscenes copied and pasted from the film, the game is its own entity, it's own version of the story. It's a real game, not just a game based on a movie – the movie hasn't even been finished yet! We have not seen it; this game is our own independent interpretation of the story, with input from Peter Jackson of course.

OPS2: Why did you decide to have two playable characters (Kong and Driscoll)? Other games that have attempted the same thing, such as *The Hulk*, have usually come up short.

Ancel: The main idea behind two playable characters is that it gives you two points of view of the same situation. You see the same events from the good side and the bad side. So it's very interesting because when you play as Kong, Ann is afraid of you at first, which comes as a change because you've previously been playing as Driscoll who is the love interest for Ann until she is taken away by Kong. But whether you play Driscoll or Kong, your objective is the same, to protect Ann and survive against the same enemies. So what's great about that is that you can play the game as Driscoll and be constantly on edge defending yourself from enemies and trying to evade the T-Rex, and it builds up enormous tension so that when you finally get to control Kong you can really unleash your aggression and power. So the contrast is very interesting and it creates a dynamic experience that's all about a build up of tension and the release. Plus Kong is much easier to handle than Driscoll, so it gives you a much more convincing feeling of being a near invincible creature.

OPS2: In order to make the experience more realistic you've left out a HUD, a targeting reticule for the weapons and a jump button. Are you worried that as a result you're going to alienate some players by being too realistic?

Ancel: Well in the finished game you will be able to turn on the targeting reticule in the options menu if you want to play in a more classical FPS style. But without the reticule you can still switch between two kinds of zoom per weapon so it still allows you to be very precise with your aiming. I like the fact that it's like real life; if you want to be precise you have to take your time with your shot and therefore it becomes more risky as you leave yourself open to a possible surprise attack. I think overall it will be a more pleasurable experience without an interface because it's a bigger challenge; it forces you to evaluate each situation for yourself very quickly and react accordingly. Also the lack of a HUD is suited to the 1933 setting; I didn't want the game to have a technological interface.

OPS2: How does the dynamic difficulty adjustment work?

Ancel: What we are doing is that if the player dies, when they restart from the last checkpoint the enemies will not be in the same place as they were before. Or maybe a Velociraptor will kill you, and when you retry in the same location the Raptor will remain but there will also be a giant salamander that will distract the Raptor and allow you to take it by surprise. So basically the more you die the easier the game becomes so in fact anyone should be able to finish *King Kong*, no matter how good they are at gaming.

OPS2: What sort of replay value is there for *King Kong*? What incentive is there for gamers to play through it twice?

Ancel: Well firstly we want to make sure that everyone who buys the game finishes it at least once! Because I don't think that all gamers actually finish every game they buy, so our intention is that *King Kong* is going to be exciting enough that anyone who starts it can't stop until they finish it.

But we also know that there are a lot of hardcore gamers that will like to replay the game multiple times and we do only have one difficulty level, but after playing the game the first time you will have had a lot of practice and be a skilled hunter so the next time you play you will be able to find hidden creatures by using the right bait, or you'll use fire to burn through foliage and find new jungle paths to secret areas and so on.

Also the fact that not much of the action in the game is scripted means that each journey through the game is more or less unique. Our testers are certainly finding a lot of surprises each time they go through the game!

OPS2: Where is the inspiration for creating *King Kong* coming from?

Ancel: Well for *King Kong* it's been largely from Peter Jackson's vision, of course. I wanted the game to be as close as possible to his vision and so we've had access to all of the production artwork and storyboards used for the movie. And the incredible creatures and environments have given us a lot of inspiration for interesting gameplay features.

OPS2: *King Kong* is the first time that you've had to make a game based on someone else's story and characters. Has it felt restrictive as a result?

Ancel: Not that much – the existing story and characters have just provided the basic frame

that we've used to build upon. For any handful of characters in the jungle you can do hours and hours of gameplay possibilities – incorporating survival, hunting and the relationships between the characters. So the frame is very large and we've brought a lot of new material in order to express ourselves. For me there's no difference between this project and one that I've made from scratch, I don't feel constrained and I've still injected plenty of myself and my own ideas into the game.


OPS2: What has the experience been like working so closely with Peter Jackson? What have you learnt from him?

Ancel: I think the main thing is that he's able to listen well and understand the videogame development process, and he's afforded us a lot of freedom with where we're taking the storyline. And that's the way he works with everybody around him, he let's everyone share his vision and it's just a great way to create something; he doesn't force just one point of view on us, he's very open to the input of others.

OPS2: Having gained an insight into the movie making process through the *King Kong* project, would you yourself ever consider abandoning the games industry and becoming a filmmaker?

Ancel: No, not at all. I'm still really excited about making games. I think that the games industry is already huge and is only going to get much, much bigger. The games industry is very much we're I'm happy to be in terms of the media.

OPS2: Now that you've built such a good relationship with Peter Jackson, do you think that he'd ever consider a reversal – to make a movie out of one of your games?

Ancel: Maybe! Maybe *Beyond Good & Evil: The Movie*! Why not? [Laughs] 



THE CAST



Character: Jack Driscoll

Actor: Adrien Brody

Jack Driscoll is the main character of *King Kong* (besides the giant ape himself), and leads the rescue team in an attempt to get Ann Darrow back. He's played by Adrien Brody, who won a Best Actor Oscar in 2003 for his role in *The Pianist* (our tip was Jack Nicholson – he deserved some kind of reward for having to see Kathy Bates naked in *About Schmidt*).



Character: Ann Darrow

Actor: Naomi Watts

She has the honour of being the plaything for the attention of the oversized and childlike Kong. She's played by Naomi Watts, the hot Australian actress who's such an electric performer that many are calling her 'Giga' Watts (okay, so no one calls her that. But just wait six months when everyone will be, and you'll think we're the coolest for starting it).



Character: Carl Denham

Actor: Jack Black

This reckless filmmaker will risk his own life and the lives of others in order to capture the best shot to film. He's played by OPS2 favourite Jack Black, one of the funniest actors in Hollywood and member of the dynamic rock music duo, Tenacious D. This is just a tribute (to him).



Character: King Kong

Actor: Andy Serkis

Andy plays human character Lumpy the Cook, as well as providing the motion capture for the computer created Kong. You also know his movements as the basis for Gollum in *The Lord of the Rings*. He's the Marlon Brando of motion capture!

must see TV



Words by: Paul Frew

No commercials. No mercy!

What would the world be like without TV? We wouldn't have classic shows like *Seinfeld*, *South Park* or *The Simpsons*, that's for sure. We wouldn't even be able to rip-off classic catchphrases like "D'oh" and "Come on doooooown!" either. And we wouldn't get those annoying advertising jingles stuck in our heads like "I like Aeroplane Jelly, Aeroplane Jelly for me". We need TV as much as we need games. Games based on movies are as common as Japanese tourists in Sydney but this year the small screen is making a big splash in the gaming world. Here's your TV guide to what's coming up...



24: The Game

The show: Jack Bauer is a counter-terrorism agent for the United States government. Each season covers exactly 24 hours and it's always one hell of a ride. In the first season Jack had to stop an assassination attempt while searching for his kidnapped daughter. The second season took place 12 months later and involved Jack searching for a nuclear bomb, stopping his daughter's employers from murdering her and working alongside the woman who killed his wife. The third season took place three years later and things didn't get any easier for Jack. He had to stop a drug cartel from releasing a deadly virus, assist President Palmer in countering a smear campaign against him and work against a traitor within the CTU. Tough stuff. The fourth season has just kicked off and is being hailed as even better than the original.

The game: As we said, there were three years separating *Season 2* and *3*, and that's where *24: The Game* will be set. Therefore it will be able to answer all your questions about what happened between those seasons. Questions like – what happened to Palmer after the assassination attempt? How did Chase score with Kim? And how the hell did she get a job in the CTU? It will also answer a bunch of other questions you hadn't even thought about but will no doubt be dying to know the answers to.

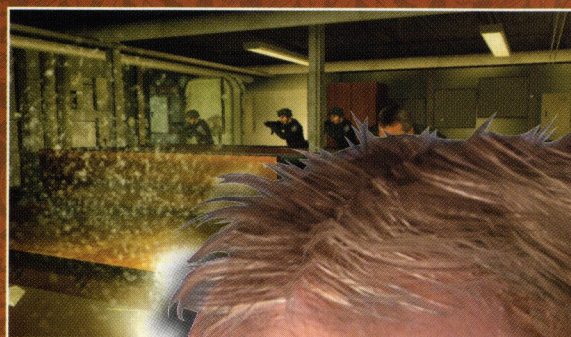
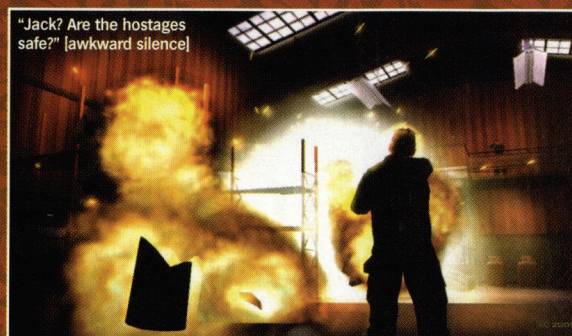
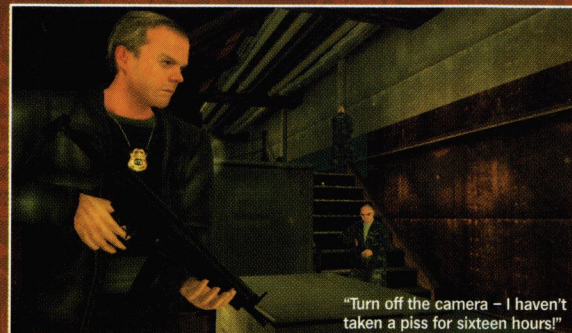
24: The Game will be presented in the same way as the show, in that there will be the multiple windows showing different views of the action

taking place, as well as important events occurring elsewhere. There'll even be a ticking clock on screen for the whole game.

Everyone on the show will be a part of the game. All the stars will be there and the show's producers are working extremely closely with the developers to make sure that *24: The Game* will be as accurate as possible. The writers of the show are even treating *24: The Game* as a real episode in the season to ensure that it has the exact same feel.

Currently there are around 100 missions that you'll have to complete which will be divided into on-foot action, driving, and typical Bauer hobbies like interrogating and phone tracing. The missions will all be timed too, and if you cruise through them without failing one of them – which is unlikely on your first attempt – then it should take you exactly 24 hours to complete. How's that for being loyal to the show?

The clock is ticking on *24: The Game* and we are counting down the seconds until we can get our hands on it.



During *Season 2*'s shooting, Elisha Cuthbert was bitten by the mountain lion she dealt with in one of the plotlines. Before shooting the scene, the animal trainer suggested she meet the mountain lion. When she went to pat it, the beast bit her hand. She was taken to the hospital, treated for puncture wounds and given a tetanus shot.

TV TRIVIA



There are so many developers out there making games based on crappy movie licenses when they could be spending their time working on kick ass TV show games! Here's some shows we'd love to see given a 3D makeover.



The O.C.

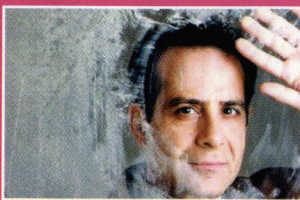
Have sex, get drunk, have more sex. Sounds awesome to us. We'd expect this to be a *Playboy: The Mansion*-style game where you have to manage relationships with



all the characters. And if you're Ryan, then that's going to be super challenging.

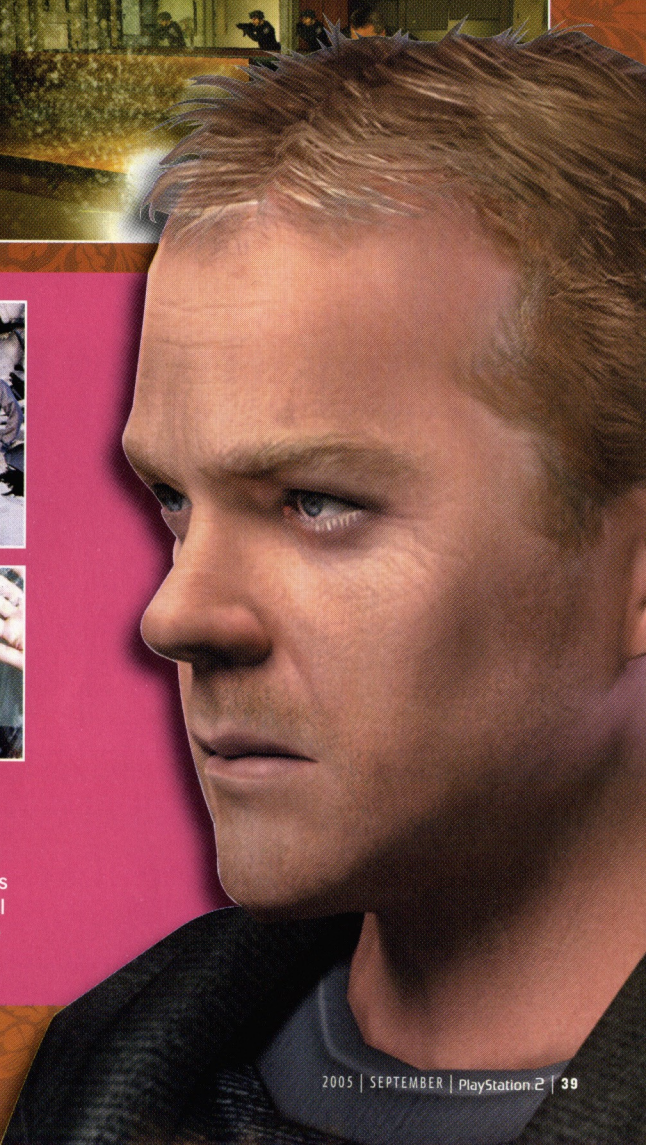
Lost

Do you remember the game *The Thing*? That's how we picture *Lost: The Game*, just without the crappy graphics. It'd be an action game where you have to keep everyone in the group on your good side. Otherwise they'll turn into an alien and RIP YOUR FRIGGIN' HEAD OFF... Um, we mean that they won't be very happy with you and probably try to kill you.

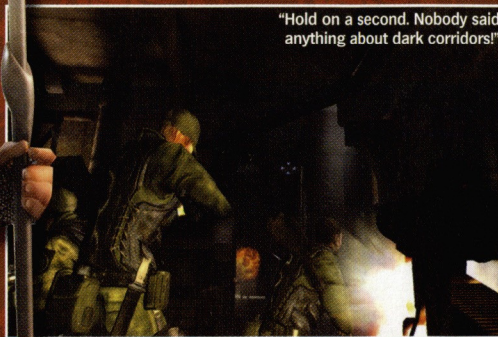


Monk

Now this would be a challenge. Not only do you have to solve the case but you have to control private investigator Adrian Monk's obsessive habits – otherwise he'll flip out and go loco. Do you have what it takes?



Stargate SG-1: The Alliance



"Hold on a second. Nobody said anything about dark corridors!"



"It's sunlight, men. So I guess we can cancel out vampires!"



Mars airport is always busy in the summer time

The show: General Hammond recruits retired Colonel, Jack O'Neill, for a secret rescue mission. During the mission, O'Neill disobeys his orders to destroy the Stargate on Planet Abydos but he does find the missing scientist, Daniel Jackson. Jackson has discovered a giant symbol written in hieroglyphics which is soon discovered to be a gate that allows the team to travel between all the Stargate planets. The show is currently filming its ninth season and looks like it could be the best season yet.

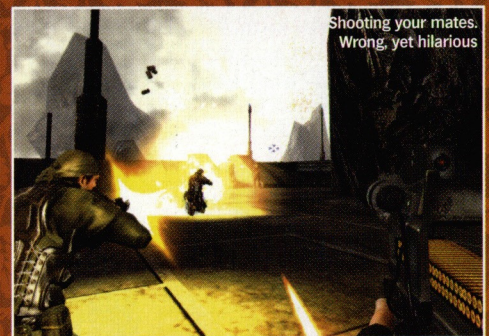
The game: You immediately feel like you're in the *Stargate* universe the second the menu screen appears. It shows a shot of the SGC (Stargate Command Centre) and the voice of the actor who makes the announcements over the PA. It's a small detail but *Alliance* is full of little things like this to satisfy the fans out there. Jumping into a mission, you'll immediately recognise the next set of voices. All the actors from the show have lent their likeness and voices to the game and were even directed by the producers of the show – so they give their best performances.

Alliance is a first-person shooter in which you'll take control of one SG-1 member while giving commands to your crew. These are only simple commands though like "take cover" and "shoot to kill".

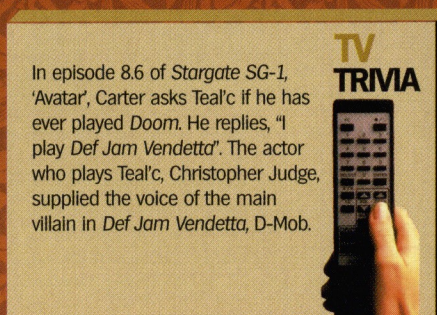
Speaking of killing, you'll be doing plenty of that with the same hardware used on the show.

The P90 will be your standard weapon on most missions but other weapons like the shotgun, sniper rifle and stinger missile launcher will also be familiar to anyone who watches the show religiously. You'll also get to handle some special weapons when controlling other members like the 'Ribbon in Carter' missions.

The recreation of the environments is another area that stays loyal to the show. The developers have tried to choose locations that not only fans of the show and movie will recognise, but that will also appeal to casual viewers. The game still has a few bugs to iron out but the team is clearly passionate about the show and dedicated to producing a *Stargate SG-1* title that will live up to fans' high expectations.



Shooting your mates. Wrong, yet hilarious



In episode 8.6 of *Stargate SG-1*, 'Avatar', Carter asks Teal'c if he has ever played *Doom*. He replies, "I play *Def Jam Vendetta*". The actor who plays Teal'c, Christopher Judge, supplied the voice of the main villain in *Def Jam Vendetta*, D-Mob.

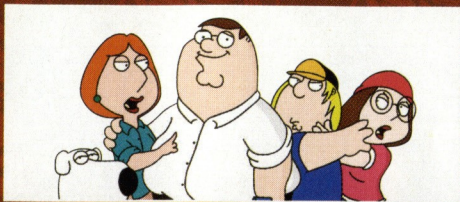
TV TRIVA



Double vision

Richard Dean Anderson's recreation within the game is uncanny. The man himself had to sign off on it, so the team knew they had to make him look good. Now that Perception has the likeness of Richard Dean Anderson sorted, maybe it can go and make a *Macgyver* game too.

Family Guy



The show: The cartoon revolves around Peter the moron father, Lois the sexy wife, Chris the whale of a son, Meg the ugly daughter, Stewie the homicidal baby and Brian the intelligent talking dog. Plain and simple, it's comedy gold.

The game: Unfortunately very little is known about *The Family Guy* game. It was announced not long after the DVD started selling like ice cream in summer and the show had been uncanceled by Fox. All we know is that it will be a third-person action title that will allow you to control Peter, Brian the Dog and the killer baby, Stewie. If we had to bet our beer budget on it, we'd guess that the game will be in the same style as *Futurama*, which isn't a bad thing at all. As long as there's a Quagmire mission where we have to pick up chicks then we'll be satisfied.

The only series in television history to be canceled by a network, and later picked up by that same network.

TV
TRIVIA

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3: Mutant Nightmare



The show: The heroes in a half shell showed up on TV back in 1987 and they're still kicking shell today. The story hasn't changed. Raphael, Donatello, Leonardo and Michaelangelo are still battling the evil Shredder and being led by Splinter. They also have an unhealthy obsession for news reporter April.

The game: Turtle power is back again and this time the game has been built from the ground up. This means a different look from the previous *TMNT* horrors, as well as new gameplay elements. You'll now be able to build up each Turtle's abilities much like in an RPG and you'll also be able to pull off team-based combo attacks. *Mutant Nightmare* will keep the four-player co-op and will also contain the original arcade classic. Hopefully this one will kick shell!

The Turtles' warehouse is located on the corner of Eastman and Laird. Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird are the creators of *TMNT*.

TV
TRIVIA

Starsky and Hutch 2



The show: *Starsky and Hutch* follows the adventures of two undercover coppers taking down dope dealers, murderers and any other thug that crosses their path. The series was remade into a movie in 2004 and even featured a cameo from the original TV stars.

The game: *Starsky and Hutch* wasn't that bad a game, but the sequel still plans on making a lot of improvements, particularly in the graphics and driving departments. You'll still be driving through the city popping caps like in the previous *Starsky and Hutch* but at least this time it will look funky and the controls won't be as frustrating as a truck in the overtaking lane. One of the new features will be a *Virtua Cop*-style gun game where no-good punks will appear out of nowhere and you get to gun them down. Sweet!

Ford actually marketed around 1,000 special edition Gran Torino hardtops during the 1976 model year with the *Starsky and Hutch* paint job.

TV
TRIVIA

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Here's a look at some of the good, bad and ugly TV show-to-game conversions.

The Good

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Chaos Bleeds

It may not have had Sarah Michelle Geller but everything else about kicked ass.

The Simpsons: Hit & Run

Like Krusty, *The Simpsons* have put their name to a lot of crappy products but this was definitely not one of them.

The bad

Miami Vice

This came out after *GTA: Vice City*. Do we need to say more?

MTV's Celebrity Deathmatch

The show was funny but the only thing laughable about the game was how bad it was.

The ugly

American Idol

Thank god we didn't have to sing to this. Phil's ringtones sound better than the "talent" in this piece of trash.

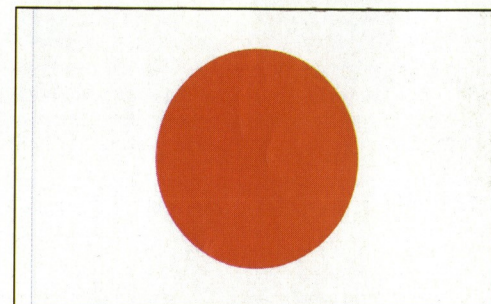
Knight Rider I & II

The first one sucked and the second one was just as bad. Why did they even make a sequel? To show everyone that it could have been worse? Mission accomplished.

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JAPAN



SOLD
OUT!



EBGAMES™

Words: Luke Reilly

KEEP THE CHANGE



Ice-cold assassin for hire Agent 47 is returning in *Hitman: Blood Money*. And this time, he's all about the Benjamins

Humans aren't the only species on this planet that will kill their own kind, but they're the only ones that'll do it for a briefcase full of unmarked \$20 bills. Being a professional killer isn't exactly widely accepted by the greater community – you'd probably cause a bit of a stir if you let it slip at your high school reunion. That said, you would be first in line for the buffet – guaranteed.

After two excellent previous appearances on PS2, the *Hitman* series has gathered a loyal set of devotees worldwide. There are hundreds of videogames about killing, but few are as cold and premeditated as *Hitman* – it's nothing personal, it's just business. IO Interactive could've quite easily tweaked *Hitman: Contracts* a little,

boshed together a few fancy levels, slapped its arse on the way out the door and fans would've lapped it up.

But that hasn't happened.

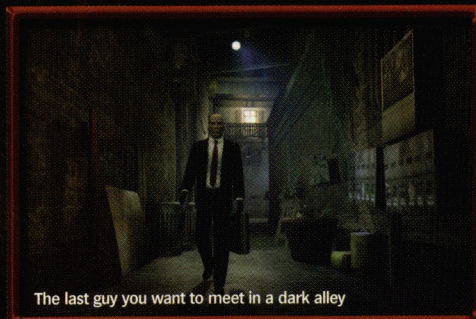
MONEY TALKS

Those familiar with the franchise should know that something would have to go drastically wrong for *Hitman: Blood Money*, the upcoming instalment, to be anything less than brilliant. Unless the crew at IO Interactive were blindfolded or replaced by super-intelligent yet easily distracted monkeys, it's a safe bet anything the Danish developer produces will be quite exceptional.

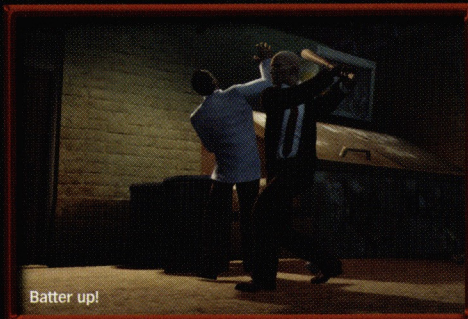
Hitman: Blood Money is no token sequel. From what we've seen, it doesn't just raise the bar set by

its predecessors – it chloroforms the bar, drags it into a dark alley and puts one between its eyes. Signs of improvement are everywhere – the visuals, the missions, the methods, the hardware – you name it, IO has addressed it.

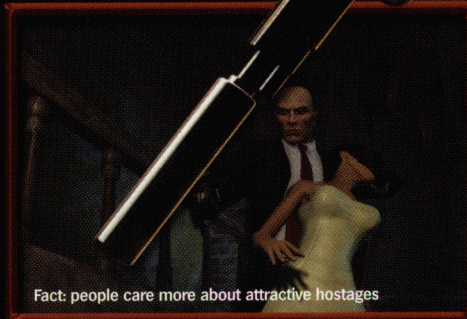
If you've already perused some of the screenshots you'll notice straight away the graphics are nothing short of amazing. The first game to utilise IO's powerful new iteration of its proprietary Glacier engine, *Blood Money* is dripping with graphical excellence. We can expect plenty of eye candy because it'll be squeezing every single drop of performance out of the PS2. The distinctive character models



The last guy you want to meet in a dark alley



Batter up!

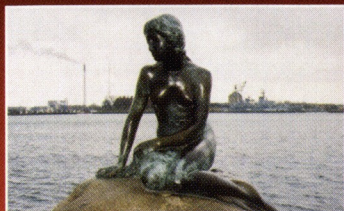


Fact: people care more about attractive hostages

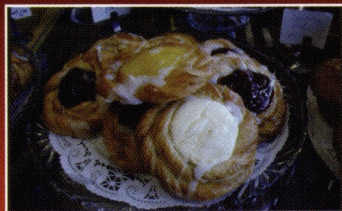
MADE IN DENMARK

The *Hitman* series isn't the only great thing to come out of Denmark...

We came across Hans Christian Andersen's Little Mermaid during our Scandinavian sojourn. Unfortunately, she really isn't as attractive as we were told she was. Plus, she's a statue – which meant asking her out would've been difficult anyway.



We couldn't leave Denmark without sampling a tasty Danish or two. Let us tell you those Danes make a mighty fine Danish. In fact, we're convinced they save the best ones for themselves (we should also mention that we're talking about the women – not the pastries).



Okay, Australian-born Crown Princess Mary wasn't made in Denmark but she's a Danish citizen now. That means future heirs to the Danish throne will be able to ice-skate and surf, mingle easily with European royalty and burp the whole alphabet.



We really wanted to meet a Viking or two while we were there. We did find some "authentic Viking helmets", although they were plastic and being sold by a little Vietnamese woman. She was a very pleasant lady, but her Nordic descent was questionable.



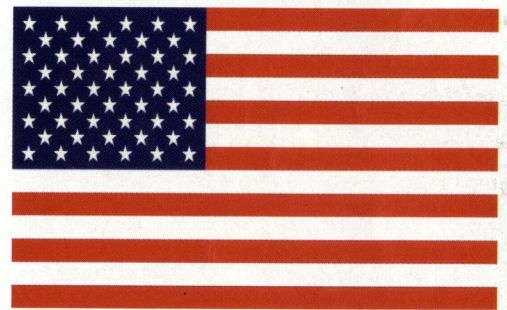


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**SOLD
OUT!**

PSP

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have been given a subtle, yet stylish, makeover and the levels we saw were packed with ridiculous amounts of gorgeous detail. Coupled with the slick visual polish, a brand new animation system has been shoehorned in too. IO has managed to compress the existing animations to use one-fifth of the memory they previously did, meaning there's now room for plenty more. That means a much deeper and more believable experience across the board, with all kinds of ambient behaviour going on all around you at all times.

The AI has also been rebuilt from the ground up, so you can expect NPCs to react accordingly to the environment and the people around them. They'll follow blood trails, investigate curious behaviour and

confiscate suspicious items. Enemies and civilians alike will take cover if you unleash a barrage of lead in their general direction – so expect more authentic bullet exchanges this time around. The controls have had some subtle tweaks too; 47 now moves independently of the camera – much like the camera system used in *Freedom Fighters*.

JUST BUSINESS

When *Hitman: Blood Money* kicks off, it may seem like business as usual. Agent 47 is back in the whacking business and still in the warm fold of the ICA. However, by the time you get to the second mission things start to go awry. 47's assassins-in-arms are beginning to appear in the morgue and the stage is set for him to be next. On that note, 47 leaves Europe for the United States – the land of opportunity. An opportunity to make a killing, that is.

This brings us to perhaps the biggest change in *Hitman: Blood Money*, bad pun intended. No longer working for the ICA, 47 is a free agent. An expensive free agent, if you know what we mean. He's now paid in cash for each gig, which makes him a little like the woman Paul brought to last year's Christmas party – except without the hepatitis. It's no gimmick either – money earned from your hits has a variety of

handy uses. You can buy upgrades for 47's five main weapons, or purchase tips and information about a particular target or location that may help you achieve those sometimes-elusive 'Silent Assassin' rankings. On top of those, if you botch a hit and leave behind a tsunami of blood and bodies you can pay for a 'clean up' – just to ensure any stray evidence 'disappears' and surviving witnesses take a dirt nap.

While the new currency system will allow you to play *Hitman* in a whole new way, the notoriety system will also affect how you act. The way you complete each level is dramatically more important than it has ever been. In previous *Hitman* games, if you did happen to get stuck on a particular level, running through ventilating anything and everything on two legs generally worked. Behaving like a psychopathic freak in one mission had no affect on the next. But all this has changed and taking the smart approach is now more important than ever. If you can manage to constantly slay your targets in total secrecy, or make their deaths look like accidents, no one will be any the wiser to your identity or presence in later missions. However, if you're consistently showing up on surveillance cameras and your chiselled features are haunting the memories of one too many survivors you'll end up as front-page news. Quite literally, in fact. (see 'Read about it').

Keep in mind, IO isn't trying to corral players onto a particular path here – you can still approach missions however you choose. This time, though, the reward for being sneaky and professional is far greater. Surgically precise hits will net more dosh – messy orgies of death will hit you hard in the back pocket. This should please anybody who felt the ability in previous *Hitman* titles to liquidate absolutely everybody without any consequences trivialised the entire experience.

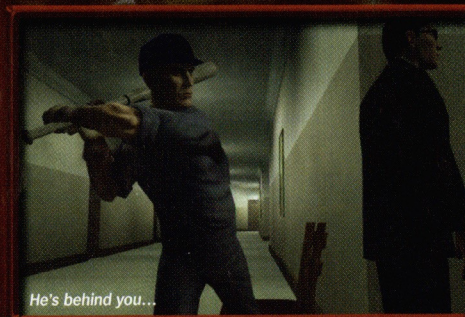
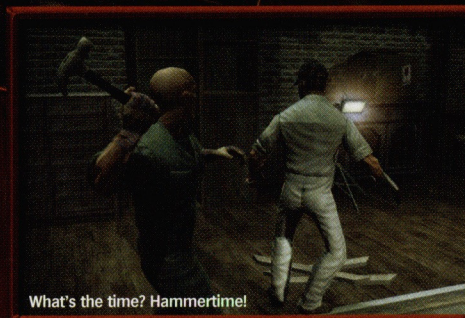
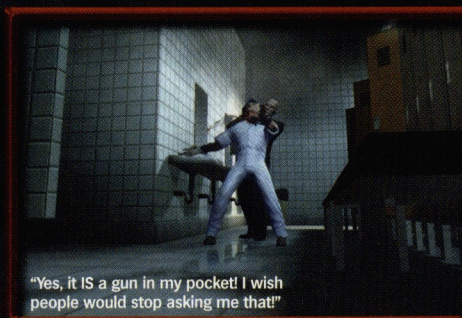
It's clear 47 has been busy during his short hiatus and he has a brand new bag of

READ ABOUT IT

Admittedly, *Hitman: Blood Money* introduces handfuls of new features – but one of the coolest is the newspaper article you'll see displayed at the end of each completed contract. The content will dynamically change depending on how you've 'finished' the objective – cause of death, people killed, and so on. It's been a long process accounting for all the variables, but it's been worth it. The most ideal scenario will be to get a simple obituary, but if you're a little sloppy your exploits might make the front page, complete with a likeness. If you're having a particularly bad day and wade in all guns blazing there's a big chance you'll be caught on tape, which will mean an unflattering photograph of yours truly will be splashed all over the cover. This ties directly into the notoriety system, as being recognised by NPCs is far more likely after a little media attention – so low notoriety is a big advantage.

FUN FACT!

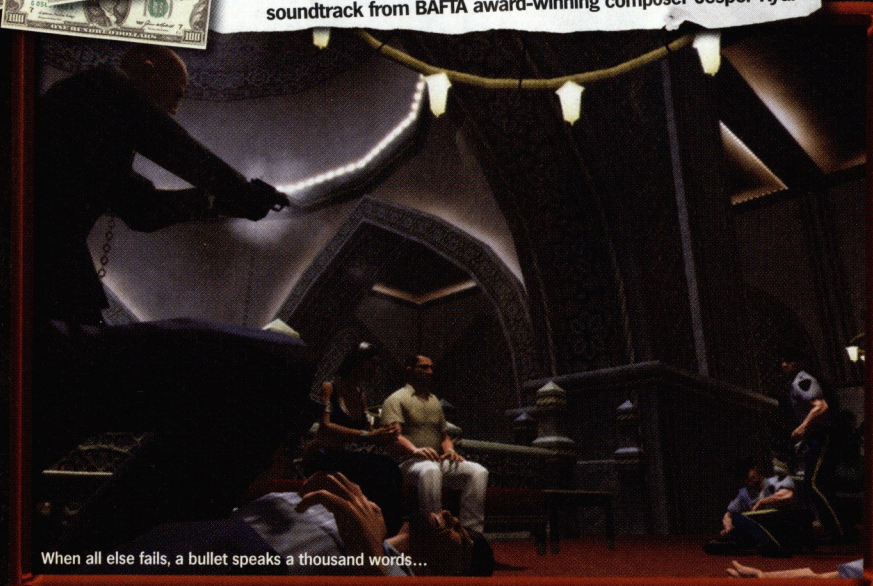
NPCs are now made up of more bones than before, so they drop and deform even more realistically!



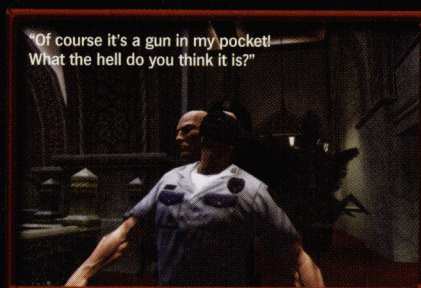


FUN FACT!

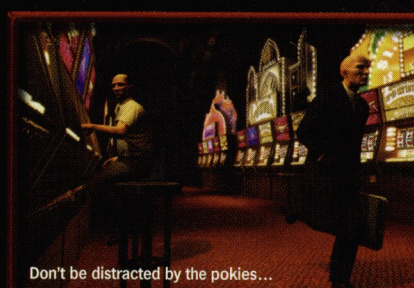
Blood Money doesn't just look good, it sounds good too. The sound of almost every weapon has been recorded from its real-world counterpart and it'll feature another kick-arse soundtrack from BAFTA award-winning composer Jesper Kyd.



When all else fails, a bullet speaks a thousand words...



"Of course it's a gun in my pocket! What the hell do you think it is?"



Don't be distracted by the pokies...

tricks. He can now push people off ledges and balconies, meaning some of your hits can look like messy suicides. It's also a handy way to keep a body out of sight. During the demo we saw this ability used twice – once to dispose of an unfortunate lug 47 just capped in the head and once to shove a potential witness off a gantry. Remember, it's not the fall that kills you. It's the sudden stop at the end. 47 can now also garrotte people from above. For instance, hiding on top of an elevator 47 hanged an unsuspecting guard, lifted his body up into the shaft via the manhole and pinched his threads.

That guard will travel up and down for days until he stinks out the place, but not everyone you murder will be in conveniently out-of-sight areas. Subsequently, body disposal is another key new feature. 47 has always had the ability to drag dead bodies to a more discreet location, but this time around he can stuff corpses in freezers, crates, or whatever is nearby. Doing so will greatly increase the chances of you completing the mission unnoticed. Other small things, like 47's ability to automatically conceal smaller weapons behind his back when walking near civilians and guards with an unholstered weapon, also combine to help keep things as clandestine as possible.

Hitman has always really been about stealth, so as a pure action experience past versions were significantly weaker. The good news is that

when the shit hits the fan in *Blood Money*, 47 can even the odds in a number of ways. Unlike games like *Splinter Cell*, getting sprung doesn't mean game over. 47 can now disarm opponents stupid enough to stand within arm's length with a swift head butt (being shot with your own weapon will damage even the sturdiest of egos). 47 can also take human shields, which have a unique tendency to either stop bullets being fired, or stop bullets entering him. We found the human shield animations particularly impressive, especially when reloading. 47 forces the hapless prisoner to the ground, pins them beneath his knee, reloads, lifts and restrains them again. Again, it's little additions like these that make the whole package shine even brighter.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Blood Money will feature around 55-60 different weapons, ranging from hammers and pitchforks to the very best in high quality firearms. If you can't find the right tool for the job you aren't looking hard enough. 47's five main weapons, including his W2000 sniper rifle, sub-machine gun and his trademark 'Silverballer' .45s, can be fully customised for any occasion. Scopes and bipods can be attached to aid accuracy and silencers can be affixed so you won't wake the neighbours. At one point six variations of 47's sub-machine gun were displayed, and they couldn't

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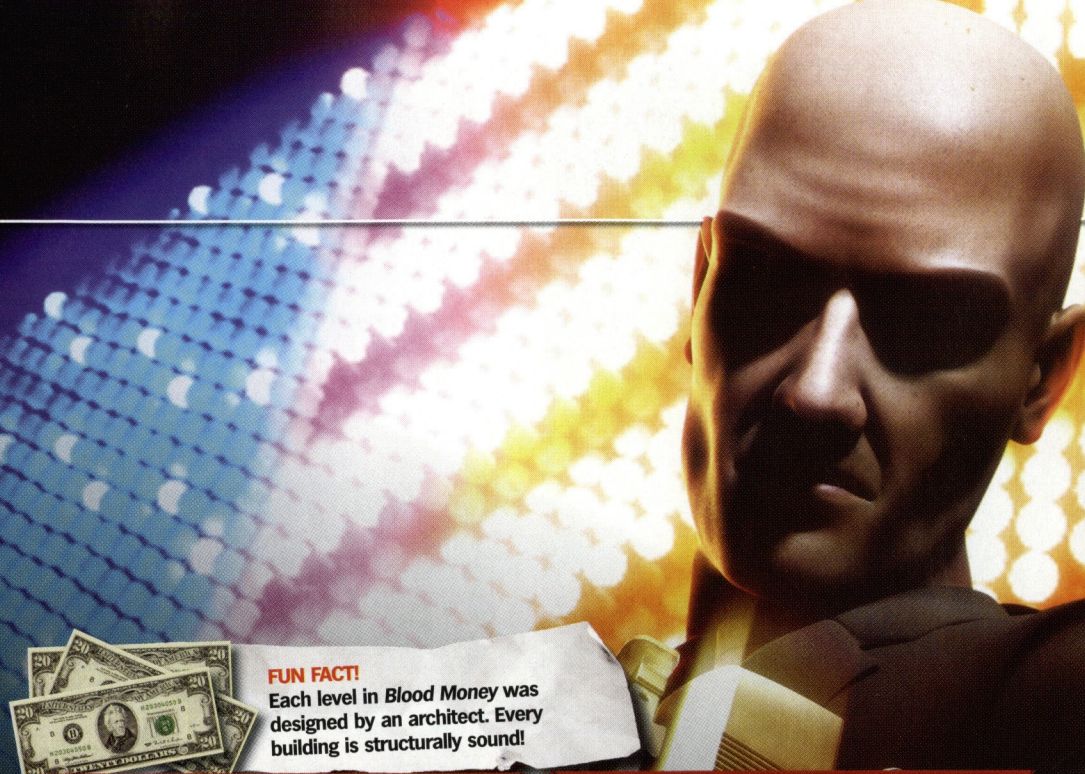
AUSTRALIA



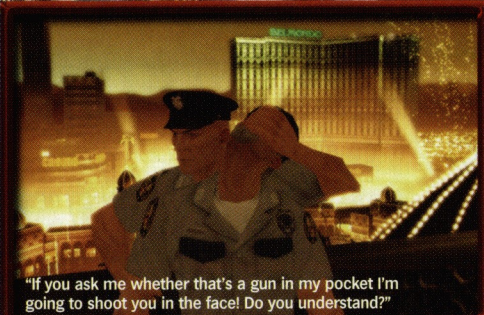
SOLD OUT?



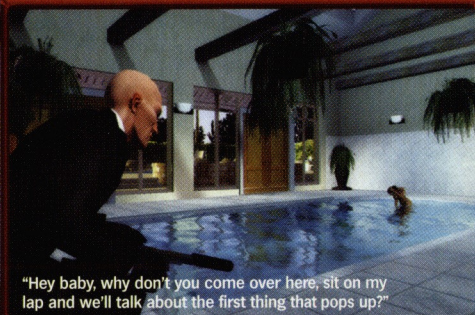
EBGAMES™



FUN FACT!
Each level in *Blood Money* was designed by an architect. Every building is structurally sound!



"If you ask me whether that's a gun in my pocket I'm going to shoot you in the face! Do you understand?"



"Hey baby, why don't you come over here, sit on my lap and we'll talk about the first thing that pops up?"

have looked more different. For instance, while one appeared factory standard, another had the stock removed and the barrel shortened to allow easy concealment. Some even had an additional magazine attached to the clip already in the gun, meaning reloading speed is increased.

In some cases you can even customise the materials your weapons are made of, which means you can make problematic metal detectors a thing of the past. Failing that, you can use 47's new ability to throw weapons to your advantage and lob weapons into currently inaccessible areas for later retrieval.

PAID IN FULL


We will be far from surprised if *Hitman: Blood Money* makes Australia and New Zealand's religious and conservative right fume with poorly-targeted anger. It's happened before. It's difficult to imagine, but despite the fact it's 2005 there are still groups of strangers out there who think they know what's best for you. Let's not forget these are the same sort of people that Fred Nile drags to the Mardi gras every year to pray

for rain. We're all for keeping *Blood Money* from the kiddies – but that's what ratings are for.

But perhaps we're putting the horse before the cart here. Sure it's ethically sketchy, but it's a game about someone who makes a living killing – so should you expect any less?

"We believe that we've captured the essence of making a stealth/shooter based game," says game director Rasmus Højengaard. "We realised that it was a complicated game and we did everything we needed to do to make this game both please the hardcore gamers, the ones who played all the *Hitman* games, but also the guys who've never played this kind of game before – we've made sure they're taught and nurtured."

For fans of *Hitman*, picking up *Blood Money* will be a no-brainer – there's probably not much we could've said to dissuade you. For the rest of you, be sure to check it out when it creeps onto shelves later this year. Unique, intelligent and unforgiving – we guarantee you *Blood Money* will be killer.

Start saving your pennies now. 

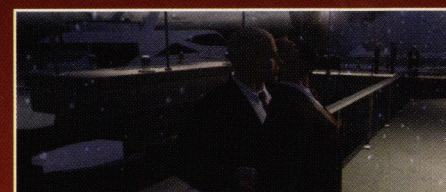
BLOOD TRAILS

IO showed us three of *Hitman: Blood Money*'s levels during our time in the studio. The first was a Las Vegas casino. 47 began on the strip with a flurry of fireworks behind him. He entered the foyer of the casino and strolled past tourists snapping photos, couples making out and a janitor cleaning up lung cookies off the polished floor. After checking in, 47 stumbled across a very drunk and horny older woman. She invited him back to her room on the level his target was. After sitting through a disturbingly scary erotic dance she passed out on the floor, leaving 47 undisturbed and free to bury a hot one in the skull of his victim, on a balcony across the courtyard. After a bit of climbing, shimmying and jumping 47 made it across the his victim's room via the balconies of the other room facing the courtyard and tossed the body over the



railing. 47 was sprung while sneaking back though another occupied room. A bloody fire fight erupted. After dispatched the nearby armed guards, 47 triggered the fire alarm that drew all civilians (ahem, all potential witnesses) to the lifts. He then triggered a remote explosive he left there previously to erase that threat. No Silent Assassin here, but it does demonstrate it's not over until the fat lady sings.

The second level was more clinically approached. Set in an opera house, 47 had two targets. One was rehearsing, the other observing. It just so happened the scene they were rehearsing was an execution scene in



a WWI opera. To cut a long story short, 47 replaced the prop pistol with a real pistol. Another actor killed the target without 47 even pulling the trigger.

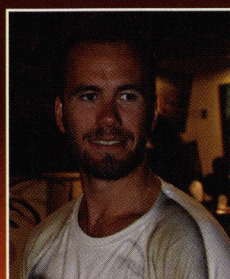
The third demo was short and sweet and involved snuffing out a nude magazine baron during a party at his private lodge in the snow. He was relaxing in a glass-bottomed Jacuzzi built into an overhanging precipice. After sneaking down to the docks (making ample use of a pickaxe he nabbed along the way) 47 put a round through the glass from below, sending his victim and his truly unfortunate harem of bikini-clad bunnies tumbling down the cliff in a shower of water and broken glass. That was a real crime, that one.



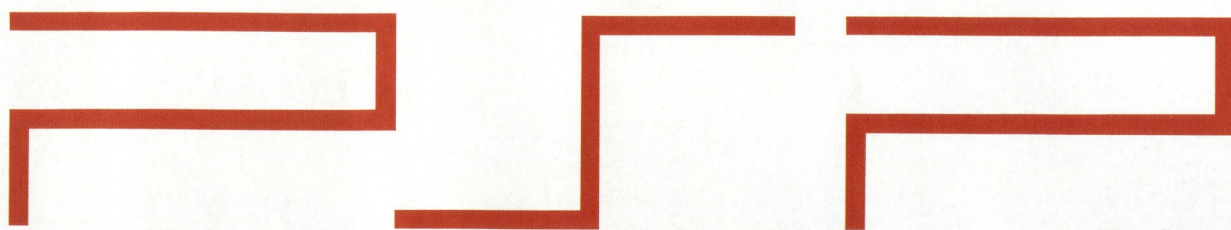
CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND

Surprisingly well-adjusted for a man who spent months and months of *Hitman: Blood Money*'s pre-design period designing increasingly elaborate ways to kill people, it's clear game director Rasmus Højengaard is happy with 47's brand new bag.

"Making this game is extremely difficult," says Højengaard. "I'm not trying to, in any way, disregard difficulty in making other kinds of games – but making this free roaming world where everything is uniquely scripted in a lot of different scenarios is just immensely complicated. On the other hand, it's very nice to do a game that's successful and no one else is really making the same thing. Like if you come up with *Grand Theft Auto* and just see this heap of other people trying to do the same thing. I'm glad that there aren't 10 other kinds of *Hitman* games out there!"



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Words: Narayan Pattison

WITH A NEW CITY, A NEW COP AND AN

ARSENAL OF IMPROVED FEATURES

TRUE CRIME: NEW YORK CITY

IS STEPPING OUT OF GTA'S SHADOW,
LINING UP ITS SIGHTS ON

THE GODFATHER

AND AIMING TO BE THE PS2'S

NEW CRIME BOSS!



Case closed: black guys do have bigger swords!

T rue Crime's fusion of GTA and Max Payne may not have been the most original formula ever, but that didn't stop it being a great fun title. The game packed chaotic shoot-outs, meaty combat and intense police chases into a non-stop blast of action. *True Crime* may have begun life as a GTA rip-off but the fact that *GTA: San Andreas* copied its fighting dojo and driving school ideas is a testament to its quality.

Unless you're colour blind, the first difference you'll notice with *True Crime: New York City* is that corn-fed white boy Nick Kang has been retired in favour of bad ass black guy Marcus Reed. While Nick Kang may have had a slight edge to him, Marcus is more criminal than cop. He grew up on the streets doing petty jobs for his father (a former crime boss who's now in the slammer). After some rival gang members try to kill him he chucks a major wobbly and goes on a murderous rampage, killing every gang member he can point his gun at. Rather than send Marcus to Sing Sing for life, the cops decide to give him a badge and

let him loose on the streets...

That's seriously the storyline. Okay, so the plot's about as believable as Paul's "my pants fell off while I was vacuuming and it accidentally got stuck in there" excuse but it does set the game up for lots of crazy action.

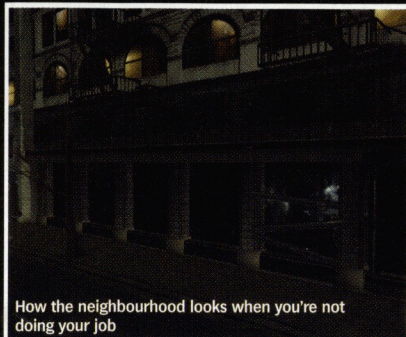
For *True Crime: NYC*, Luxoflux has recreated the entire island of Manhattan. While this may initially sound smaller than the original's Los Angeles setting, the game environment is actually many times the size thanks to the new ability to explore building interiors and travel through the city's underground train system.

CLEANING UP THE STREETS

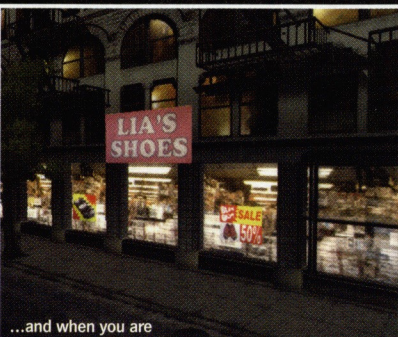
Random street crimes still occur like they did in *True Crime*, but they are much deeper and more dramatic in the sequel. Luxoflux has confirmed that criminals you are chasing on the street will often duck into nearby buildings forcing you to evolve your tactics.

When random street crimes occur, like a drug deal, you will be able to choose how you want to handle the crime. You can: a) Knock the dealer out with a swift punch and slap the cuffs on; b) interrogate the dealer about his supplier, then arrest the supplier; or c) unload a full clip into the dealer's face, then pocket the cash and drugs. If you answered "a" you're a bit of a sissy but you earned some good cop points and will get that promotion one day. For the smart cookies who answered "b" you scored yourself a truckload of good cop points and your promotion's a done deal. If you answered "c" then you're our kind of cop – ruthless and completely immoral. We like the way you roll.

A similar good cop/bad cop dynamic was present in the original *True Crime* but it was little more than a novelty. Players who did have a bad cop rating found themselves running into a gameplay brick wall about 30% of the way through the game (where the bad cop ending cuts in). To continue with the game's main storyline players needed to make up for all of their



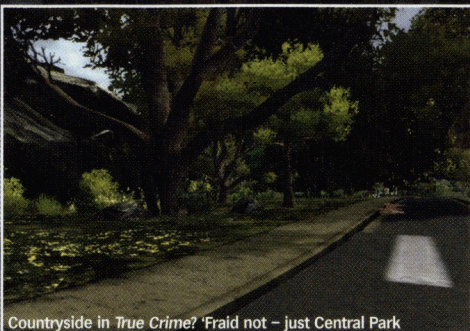
How the neighbourhood looks when you're not doing your job



...and when you are

CLEANING UP THE HOOD

One of the most interesting new features in *True Crime: New York City* is the way your actions have a direct impact on the city around you. If you ignore crimes in an area for too long the crime rates will soar and the neighbourhood will soon be filled with trash, graffiti and busted up shopfronts. If you continue to ignore the crime you will be demoted from detective to a uniformed cop on the beat. As a uniformed officer you won't be able to investigate the game's main plotline. This level of detail within the environment sounds brilliant, but Luxoflux will have to be careful that the need to solve street crimes doesn't become a constant distraction from the main action.



Countryside in *True Crime*: 'Fraid not – just Central Park

reckless kills by solving street crimes as a wussy law abiding policeman until they'd collected the necessary good cop rating. Boring.

True Crime: New York City's good cop/bad cop dynamic is much more fleshed out. Your actions now have a much bigger and more enjoyable impact on the game. Players who choose to follow the rules and be a good cop will find themselves being promoted through the ranks much faster and gaining access to improved equipment and upgrades.

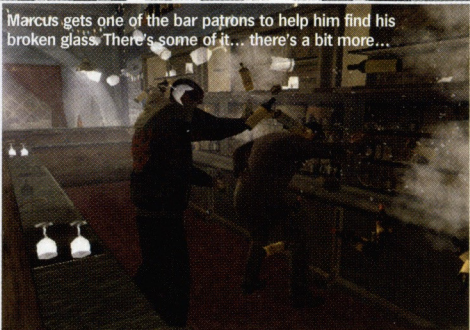
If, like us, you'd rather play as a dodgy bugger, you'll be stoked to hear that there are still plenty of benefits within the game. You can ignore every rule in the book as you sell contraband weapons and drugs from the police lock-up and participate in underground fight clubs and street races for cash. With your illegally gained cash you can buy black market weapons and upgrades that will give you the same advantages as the lawful police upgrades.

FIGHT CLUB

Combat has been far from neglected in *True Crime: New York City*. As well as a handful of different martial arts styles to perfect, there are brutal new environment-sensitive attacks. See an open fireplace just begging to have a thug's head barbequed in it? Go for it. Wanna smash a chair over the perp's head, then stab him in the heart with a shattered chair leg Buffy-style? If it's in the room – it's in the game.

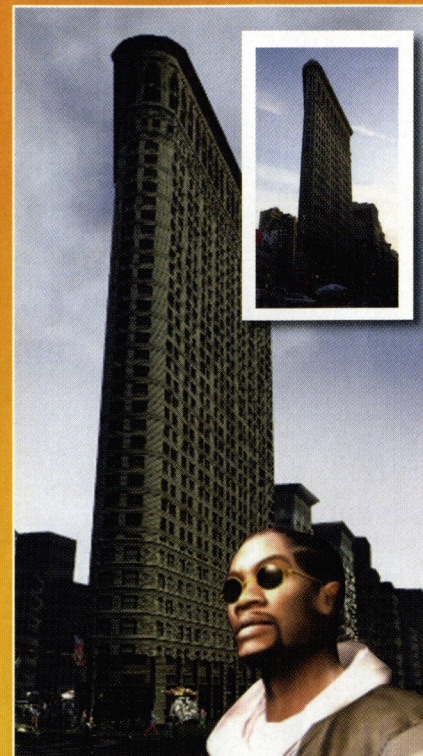
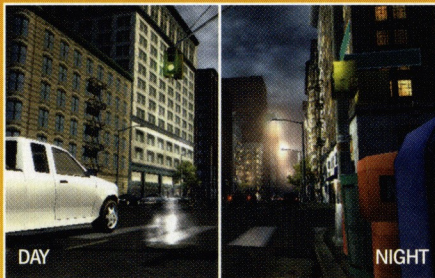
When it came to weapons, the inability to carry more than two guns at once was a definite disappointment in the original. In a very cool nod to *Pulp Fiction* you can stack an epic arsenal of beauties into your boot, including nasty newbies like flamethrowers and sniper rifles. The amount of guns Marcus can stuff in his jacket has also been boosted for the sequel but Luxoflux wouldn't nail down any specifics just yet.

Marcus gets one of the bar patrons to help him find his broken glass. There's some of it... there's a bit more...




NEW YORK, NEW YORK

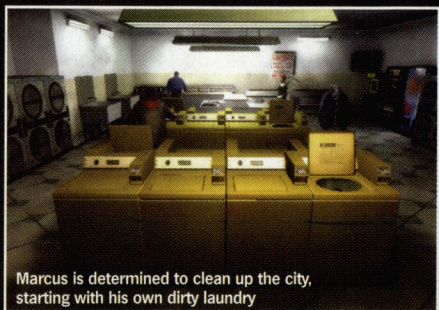
One of the original *True Crime*'s greatest achievements was its staggeringly authentic recreation of Los Angeles. Well, it wouldn't be a sequel if Luxoflux didn't go above and beyond everything it achieved previously. The new game features a GPS-accurate recreation of the city that never sleeps. As well as all the famous landmarks (check out the photo-to-screenshot comparison) all of Manhattan's famous neighbourhoods feature authentic atmospheres. From the towering neon and crowds of tourists at Times Square to the laid-back locals of Harlem, the game is overflowing with New York flavour. A painstakingly detailed day-to-night effect also ensures the game feels realistic no matter what time it is.



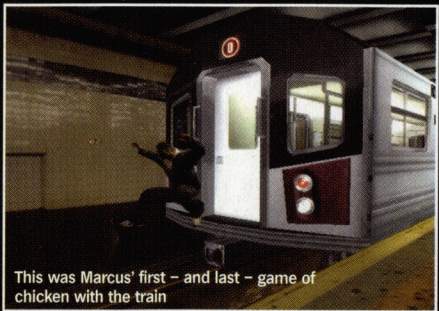
WHAT IF?

The list of features for *True Crime: New York City* is longer than King Kong's banana, and it's clear that Luxoflux has made serious improvements in every area that the sequel was weak in. We're definitely booking ourselves in for a tour of New York City. That doesn't mean that there aren't still plenty of questions we'd like answered, though.

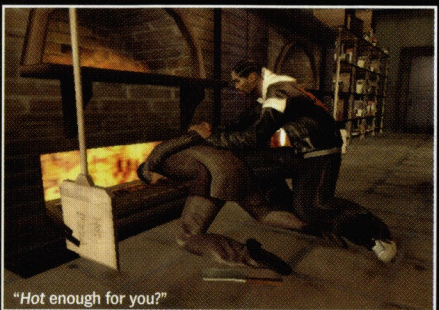
The idea of being able to enter hundreds of office towers has us drooling with excitement. Imagine if there was a group of Uzi-toting terrorists on the 23rd floor. What if rather than just going in guns blazing, you could take the stairs up to the 24th floor, shoot out one of the windows, rappel down the side of the building then start shooting the terrorists from outside? What if this 'office tower rappelling' move wasn't scripted so that you could do it out of any window of any building? What if you could take out the same terrorists by collecting a sniper rifle, heading up to the roof of a nearby skyscraper and taking shots from there? What if you could ride a motorcycle up the fire stairs of one skyscraper, blast out of the window of the building a few hundred feet up, before smashing through the window of another building, jumping off the bike, targeting its gas tank with your gun and toasting the terrorists in an explosion that they definitely did not see coming? Can you pull off any of these crazy moves in *True Crime: New York City*? We don't know yet but we're on the case to find out! And we guarantee you'll be the first to hear about it when we do! 



Marcus is determined to clean up the city, starting with his own dirty laundry



This was Marcus' first – and last – game of chicken with the train



"Hot enough for you?"



STREET TALK

OPS2 grilled *True Crime: New York City* creative director, Peter Morawiec for the word on the street

How much of New York have you been able to cram onto the disc?

We've decided to focus solely on Manhattan as it is a very dense and diverse cityscape and we want to make sure it gets done right. What I mean by "right" is making sure we deliver a level of detail and interactivity we know gamers want in a game – access to interiors, subways, escalating neighbourhood crime rates, and more.

Tell us a little about the new guy, Marcus Reed.

His father is an incarcerated New York City underworld kingpin and Marcus himself is a former gang member who was following in his father's footsteps. When his father's childhood friend Terrence Higgins, a police detective, shows up and offers Marcus a way off the streets, Marcus becomes a cop, eventually earning his detective shield and joins Terrence as a partner. However, the very day Marcus earns his shield Terry dies under suspicious circumstances. Devastated, Marcus takes it upon himself to investigate what happened, going head-on against NYC's four largest crime syndicates.

How does the sequel's cast compare to the original's star-studded line-up?

We have secured great talent for the game and have additional talent negotiations in the works. We are confident that our choices will appeal to both casual and hardcore gamers.

Can you still visit dojos and shooting ranges to improve your skills?

There is a similar system in place however all training has now been consolidated within the police department. This time around, we have some inventive obstacle courses to negotiate and Marcus is able to go undercover to bust underground fight clubs and illegal car races throughout the city.

How interactive will this digital New York be?

We are allowing the player to enter virtually any interior within the city – all kinds of shops, restaurants, clubs, banks, residences and industrial interiors. We've developed a special editor to create dozens of unique interior layouts with hundreds of props. Players can now explore inside buildings at will, in search of evidence or just to interact with the inhabitants. You can break down doors, encounter random crimes, and seamlessly pursue perps in and out. And let's not forget a fully functional subway system!

How detailed will the city be this time around?

We are pulling all the stops in order to deliver the most authentic city experience possible. People have very concrete expectations from New York – not just having all the streets and some landmarks but also the vibrant atmosphere and diversity. Videogame cities tend to look very sterile however our city team is changing that – we have crowds, seas of yellow taxis, neon galore, steaming manholes, street vendors, dingy alleys and more. I'm pretty certain that gamers will be blown away by our city. The promise of a truly "go anywhere" game environment has finally arrived.

Will *True Crime: New York City* feature random crimes to solve?

Actually the city crimes are just as important as the story cases. After Terry's death, Marcus is demoted back to his old Street Crime Unit, which is responsible for crime rate reduction across all Manhattan precincts. Since Marcus must solve Terry's murder on the "QT," his official job is to clean up the city. To this effect, our crimes system has been greatly expanded and features tiered crimes and much-improved perp AI. For instance, an escalating crime rate is reflected precinct by precinct via our new 'grit system' – the higher the crime rate, the more crimes, gang activity, trash, graffiti, and foreclosures.

FUN FACT!

Luxoflux put billboards advertising jockstraps with a "J*" logo spoofing Rockstar's "R*" logo in *True Crime*. Rockstar bit back with "True Grime: Street Cleaners" ads in *San Andreas*.

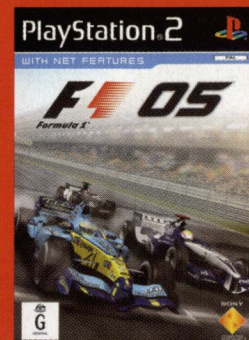


What time is it? Bullet Time!



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Much faster.***

fun,
anyone?
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WELCOME TO PSP



It's here at last! It's been a technology-packed carrot dangling in front of gamers since it was announced way back at E3 2003, and now the world's first true 3D portable game system has finally arrived. PlayStation Portable (PSP) is a true revolution in handheld entertainment. While competing products have taken small steps to gradually tweak and improve their technology over time, Sony has taken one giant leap right out of the gates with a system packed full of innovative features. Despite its pocket size, the PSP can do everything your PS2 can do – and more! September 1st is the first day of the rest of your portable gaming life – mark it in your diary!



GAMES

Previously the quality of handheld games had to be sacrificed in favour of portability. That Snake game on your mobile phone totally sucks but hey, at least you can play it at the bus stop, right? Forget that. The PSP brings everything you can enjoy within your lounge room directly into the palm of your hand. Whether you're on the train, on a plane or in the waiting room at the dentist, you'll still be able to enjoy the cutting-edge graphics and sound featured in the hottest gaming franchises including *Need for Speed*, *Tony Hawk*, *V8 Supercars* and *Grand Theft Auto*.



MOVIES

Like the PS2, the PSP is equipped for movie playback right out of the box. Movies can either be played in MPEG format straight from Memory Stick Duo, or purchased on Universal Media Disc (UMD). Each UMD provides DVD quality audio and video, and is formatted to fit the PSP's 16:9 widescreen. Here are just a handful of the blockbuster films headed to UMD within the first few months after the PSP launch:

- *Van Helsing*
- *8 Mile*
- *The Fast and the Furious*
- *The Chronicles of Riddick*
- *The Bourne Identity*
- *I, Robot*
- *Dodgeball*
- *Aliens Vs. Predator*
- *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*
- *The Punisher*
- *Hellboy*
- *Bad Boys*



MUSIC

You can download your favourite tracks from either a CD or the Internet directly onto a Memory Stick Duo, and then play them back via either the PSP speakers or the bundled headphones. Custom soundtracks have already been confirmed as featuring in games such as *V8 Supercars 2*, allowing PSP owners to play back their favourite tunes while playing their favourite game. There are even music video compilations planned for release on UMD, so there's a good chance you'll be able to take every Britney Spears music video ever made with you wherever you go. Is there anything this thing can't do?



PHOTOS

Never mind the dog eared picture of your girlfriend in your wallet, with your PSP and a Memory Stick Duo you can carry around an entire album of high resolution photos in your pocket that are guaranteed to never fade. The PSP supports the JPEG image format, which is basically the format used by every digital camera in the world, and you can view either one picture at a time or several in a slide show. You can also flip, rotate and zoom in on each picture. Whether they're a photographic recount of your holiday in Vanuatu, or the stylish shots you took of your favourite ride in *Gran Turismo 4*'s Photo Mode, you'll always have something to gaze upon longingly when you're away from loved ones.



CONNECTIVITY

Wireless gaming is handled with ease on PSP. There's no need to bother setting up complicated network settings, just get two or more PSP units in close proximity, select the multiplayer option in the game menu and away you go! Wireless gaming is also supported over the Internet via wireless routers or adaptors in your home network, so PSP owners from all over the globe can play against each other – no matter where they are!

If you want to transfer data such as music files or save games from your PC, you can connect to the USB 2.0 port on your PSP and away you go. Future PS2 titles will also support connectivity with certain PSP games, such as the upcoming *Jak X* (PS2) and *Daxter* (PSP) games, which will enable you to unlock a host of exclusive features.

ACCESSORIES

The PSP Value Pack (\$399.95 AUS, \$429.95 NZ) comes with everything you need to get started, a sample UMD, a rechargeable battery, AC adaptor, 32MB Memory Stick Duo, headphones with remote, wrist strap and soft case. You'll also be able to buy a number of accessories separately including spare batteries, travel speakers and hard cases.

Memory Stick Duo's sold separately reach up to 1GB in size, and other accessories hinted at but not confirmed include microphones and EyeToy-style cameras (for both gaming and communications). But who knows what else the boffins at Sony will come up with?



PSP Play-test



X RACING

RIDGE RACER

Sony and Namco's racing love affair heats up

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: NAMCO ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.namco.com

Namco's flagship racer always seems to pop up whenever Sony launches a new console, so we weren't overly shocked to see *Ridge Racer* line up at the PSP's starting grid.

Ridge Racer has gone back to basics. Instead of focusing on realistic graphics and physics, *Ridge Racer* focuses on what it does best, balls-out arcade racing. The main single-player mode is the World Tour, where you'll compete in dozens of races in a range of street machines. The only problem we have is that defeating the competition is as easy beating Rove in a boxing match. The races do get more challenging further down the track, but you'll have to put up with a lot of Sunday drivers before you get to take on the big guns.

The best new addition to the series is the inclusion of nitro. You'll build up your nitro meter by performing daring drifts and overtaking opponents. Once it's filled, clear the road and strap yourself in for a surge of face-melting speed.

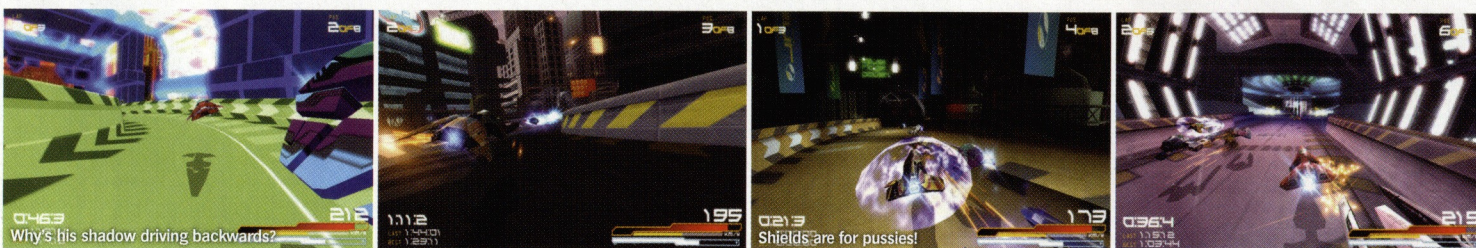
For once *Ridge Racer* looks like it does everything right. Visually it's great, the controls are tight, nitro kicks ass and there're tonnes of races to keep you occupied. While the opponents are lightweights to begin with, you do get over it when you start facing the real competition. There's definitely no shortage of racers on PSP, but *Ridge Racer's* rock-solid handling and intense speed allows it to edge out *Rivals* for pole position. **A Paul Frew**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	09	Lush backgrounds and stunning cars
SOUND	08	All the previous RR soundtracks and more
GAMEPLAY	09	Simple controls plus the awesome nitro
LIFESPAN	09	So many comps – so little time

Easily one of the strongest launch packages, *Ridge Racer* deserves a place in any PSP collection.

09



X RACING

WIPEOUT PURE

The only excuse for listening to Techno...

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: STUDIO LIVERPOOL ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.wipeoutpure.com

Wipeout was one of the first great PlayStation franchises and, along with other pillar titles such as *Tekken* and *Tomb Raider*, was largely responsible for broadening the appeal of videogames and attracting a larger mainstream audience.

So it comes as no surprise that Sony's Studio Liverpool has developed a new *Wipeout* game for the PSP launch. Rather than simply rehash an older version or throw together a cheaply produced compilation, *Wipeout Pure* is a brand new game packed with innovative features that may well make it the definitive version in the series.

Pure has a number of different racing modes, from

the basic Single Race and Time Trial options through to medal-based tournament cups. Arguably the most enjoyable mode is Zone, which removes weapon power-ups from the track and sends you through a series of zones packed with boosts that gradually increase your top speed. As there's no armour replenishments to collect, you basically have to see how far you can get before your ship explodes. After a few zones you'll be going so fast that one wrong move could be your undoing, and it's certainly a heart-stopping ride.

If you've got some friends with *Wipeout Pure* then say goodbye to your spare time. Multiplayer races have limitless replay value, and the promise of downloadable content makes it a keeper. **A Tristan Ogilvie**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

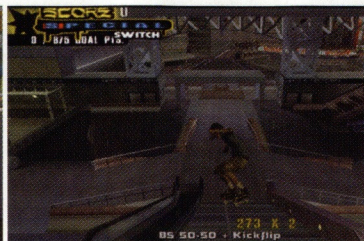
GRAPHICS	08	Stylish and lightning fast
SOUND	09	Superb electronica soundtrack
GAMEPLAY	09	The best <i>Wipeout</i> yet
LIFESPAN	09	Limitless for multiplayer, plenty to do solo

Wipeout Pure is a highly recommended title for both longterm fans and newcomers. It'll be hard to resist picking this one up when you buy your PSP.

09



Naked Dude Mode? We did not see that one coming



273 X 2
BS 50:50 Kickflip



One slip and he's in for some nasty testicle-retrieval surgery
Beardslide



BS 50:50 BS 50:50

X SPORTS

TONY HAWK UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX

The Birdman's remix plays a sweet tune

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER: SHABA GAMES ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.activision.com

Many *Tony Hawk* fans were disappointed by the PS2 *THUG2* because it focused too much on *Jackass* antics and not enough on skateboarding. For the PSP version, Shaba Games has done a Fatboy Slim and re-cut the original into a rocking remix.

Tony and the gang have never looked better. The PSP's super crisp screen really makes the visuals pop. The classic *Hawk* controls are instantly familiar and will have you grinding your way to insane combos in seconds.

THUG2 Remix packs in everything *THUG2* had plus Shaba Games has spoiled us by throwing in four new levels to ollie on including sunny Las Vegas, sizzling Atlanta, stunning Kyoto and sexy Santa Cruz.

The Wi-Fi multiplayer mode is where the serious fun is at. *THUG2 Remix* comes with over 10 multiplayer games for up to four players. Some of the highlights include Combo Mambo where the player with highest combo at the end of the time limit wins; SLAP!, where you have to smack stickers on your opponents; and Fireball, where you shoot fireballs at your opponents until they're toasted. It's probably where you'll spend most of your time because it's so easy to jump in and have a quick skate with friends.

While most of the fun will be had when you're kicking it with mates, *THUG2 Remix* offers instant blasts of fun whenever you've got a few minutes to rack up some combos. **Paul Frew**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Looking good, Birdman
SOUND	09	Over 50 rocking tunes
GAMEPLAY	08	Instantly familiar
LIFESPAN	08	Plenty to do and unlock

Tony's first outing on the PSP overs even slicker skating antics than its PS2 big brother!

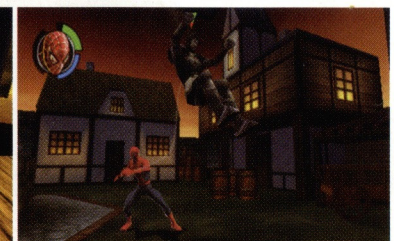
08



Just like the 'birds' Paul normally picks up



Four tentacles? He must be a hit with the ladies



X ADVENTURE

SPIDER-MAN 2

Meet the wall-crawler's baby brother – Spider-Boy

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER: VICARIOUS VISIONS ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.activision.com

A radioactive spider is probably the last thing you want to stuff down your pants, but the PSP *Spider-Man 2* is one creepy crawl that deserves a second chance. After two blockbuster *Spider-Man* games on PS2, Activision has produced a very slick, if a little trimmed down, web-swinging experience on PSP.

Rather than directly converting the PS2 *Spider-Man 2* (which had a huge recreation of Manhattan to explore) the PSP version uses a mission-based system that confines your web-swinging to smaller environments. Although the trimmed down playgrounds are initially disappointing, Spider-Man's arsenal of super powers are just as exciting to perform as ever. Taking one thug

out of the fight by webbing him up, then belting nine shades of crap out of another with an explosive combo of attacks has never been easier.

What's most impressive about *Spider-Man 2* is that it contains brand-new cut-scenes, movie cast voiceovers, missions and boss encounters never featured in either PS2 game. Playing totally new missions with never before heard Spidey dialogue is a definite blast.

The only area where Spidey's new adventure becomes seriously unstuck is in the length department (Paul wasn't kidding when he said he was "just like Spider-Man"). For experienced web-heads it's possible to KO Doc Ock in the final boss battle in under four hours. **Narayan Pattison**

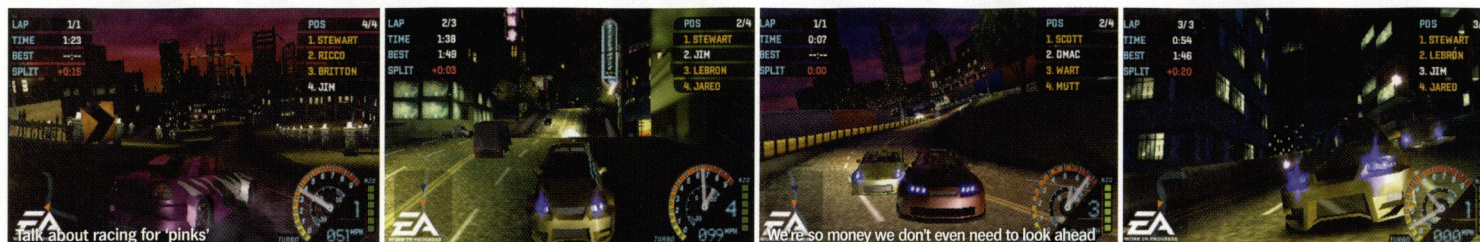
X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Some of the best visuals yet on PSP
SOUND	07	So-so effects but impressive cast voiceovers
GAMEPLAY	07	Slick controls and combat but limited depth
LIFESPAN	06	It gets one point for each hour it lasts!

It may be the runt of the litter compared to its big brothers on PS2 but the web-head's worth a spin on PSP.

06

PSP Play-test



X RACING

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS

A few more rockets for your pocket

DISTRIBUTOR: EA ■ DEVELOPER: EA ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.eagames.com

Being stuck on a crawling train between a bawling two-year-old and a sweaty man would be enough to make anyone feel the need for speed. Fortunately, EA has shrunk the *Need for Speed* series just for such an occasion.

Rivals takes most of the things that made the PS2 versions successful and crams them into the PSP, resulting in an instantly recognisable and accessible racer.

Rivals features 10 unique tracks, although you'll find some sections of them quite familiar. The 20 car garage is also quite familiar too.

Each of the four race types has ten stages with three difficulty levels each. Unfortunately, you can only win a certain difficulty level once, so there's a limited amount

of points you can earn to buy cars and upgrades.

The racing is solid (drag racing is still easily the shining star) and the cars feel like they have real weight. The graphics are ridiculously impressive and the sound is not far behind. The biggest problem is the catch-up AI – even when returning to old races in a fully upgraded ride, stock standard shopping carts will be nipping at your heels when they should be a speck in your rear vision mirror.

Rivals is addictive, but a few flaws keep it from being perfect. It doesn't try too hard to be as overly trendy as *Underground 2* did (thankfully there's no Burger King product placement), but there are still a few elements that needed extra attention. **Luke Reilly**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	09	A PSP poster boy for stunning visuals
SOUND	08	Great effects, an eclectic (and recycled) soundtrack
GAMEPLAY	07	Occasionally frustrating but mostly manageable
LIFESPAN	07	Stacks to unlock, but only two-player Wi-Fi

A respectable debut from the *Need for Speed* stable, although how it stacks up against *Midnight Club 3* remains to be seen.

08



X SPORTS

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR

Is that a three-wood in your pocket?

DISTRIBUTOR: EA ■ DEVELOPER: EA ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.eagames.com

The good news is that EA has packed a mean game of golf into Tiger's PSP debut. You know how they say the worst thing about golf is that it ruins a good walk? Well, now you can play golf on the PSP while walking!

For the most part, *Tiger Woods* is a good game. It looks great and it's brimming with courses, modes and features. The biggest problem is the control scheme has not translated well from the PS2 to the PSP. It's almost as if the swinging animation and the act of pulling back on the analogue aren't synchronised. To put it simply, it's just not as intuitive as the console versions. For a franchise built on "Total Precision Swing" technology, it's a let down.

Tiger Woods features the "Game Face" character

customisation feature introduced in *Tiger Woods 2004* and streamlines the different modes of play *Tiger* fans are used to. The Legend Challenges mode is the best, reminiscent of the Scenario mode found in PS2 *Tiger* games. These challenges present you with a series of specific scenarios and are both addictive and challenging. *Tiger's* multiplayer modes are both turn-based and Wi-Fi, and offer games like skins, long drive shootout games, and the new "Bingo Bango Bongo" mode – which is sort of like speed golf.

Once you waded through the menus and learn to endure the mind-numbing load times there's a decent game of golf to be had here – it just would've benefited from a little extra optimisation. **Luke Reilly**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	09	Great presentation, very impressive visuals
SOUND	07	Quality commentary, decent in-game effects
GAMEPLAY	06	A little inconsistent because of ropey controls
LIFESPAN	07	Plenty to do – great multiplayer modes

Long load times and control issues abound, but there are plenty of holes to sink your balls into. Grab it if Everybody's Golf isn't your bag.

07



X ACTION

DYNASTY WARRIORS

The mighty warrior has shrunk in size and goodness

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: KOEI ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

Usually Dynasty Warriors hits the spot. Everything looks squeaky clean and there's no slowdown when the 16:9 screen is littered with assassins. However it's almost impossible to tell where these guys are coming from because the camera is zoomed in too close to your warrior.

Another problem with it is that there are no more long journeys where you travel from battle to battle. *Dynasty Warriors* separates the battles with menu screens, which breaks up the action and spoils your murderous rhythm.

We know the game could be better

than this so it's unfortunate that its PSP debut has a few hiccups. Hopefully Koei will show more fighting spirit with the sequel. **Paul Frew**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Great animations
SOUND	06	Same old battle themes
GAMEPLAY	04	It just doesn't work well
LIFESPAN	05	Brief campaign

Dynasty Warriors looks great doesn't flow well.

06



X CAR COMBAT

FIRED UP

Hardware: Online Arenas comes to the PSP

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: SONY ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

Although *Hardware* was solid and reasonably enjoyable; it just didn't provide enough of a hook to hold your interest in the long term. Likewise it's spiritual successor on the PSP, *Fired Up*.

It's got plenty of arenas, an arsenal of beefy weaponry and wireless multiplayer support for up to eight players (with single UMD game sharing), but it just doesn't provide anything revolutionary.

There are a few cool features, though. You can never get out on foot, but several of the maps have gun turrets that you can transfer into. There's a nice mix of vehicles too, from nimble jeeps to mammoth tanks.

If you're in the mood for multiplayer death on wheels, *Fired Up* will give you a jumpstart. Just don't expect a nitrous-fuelled turbo boost. **Tristan Ogilvie**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Large detailed maps
SOUND	07	Adequate weapon sounds
GAMEPLAY	07	Solid fun, not outstanding
LIFESPAN	07	Friends with PSPs are a must

Solid effort, but without the Wi-Fi it's nothing special.

07



X FIGHTING

DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER

Do the monster mash

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: CAPCOM ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

You may not have heard of it, but the *Darkstalkers* series has been kicking ass for 10 years now. *The Chaos Tower* is actually a hybrid of all the previous *Darkstalkers* games.

Essentially it's similar to *Street Fighter*, but a little faster and kookier. Readjusting to the PSP's D-pad will take fighting veterans a little time to get used to but it's not a major obstacle. Wi-Fi play is the highlight *Darkstalkers* though. Thanks to the PSP you'll be able jump into a fight with anyone who owns a PSP. Wi-Fi fights like this left us very excited about the future of fighting games on the PSP.

Darkstalkers is a solid fighter but with *Street Fighter* on the horizon you should figure out which camp you're in before slapping down the cash. **Paul Frew**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	07	Colourful and speedy
SOUND	06	Generic battle tunes
GAMEPLAY	07	D-pad can frustrate initially
LIFESPAN	06	Wi-Fi is the main focus

The best PSP Fight Club so far!

07



X ACTION RPG

UNTOLD LEGENDS: BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLADE

Legendary D&D invades PSP

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER: SONY ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

Untold Legends breaks the rules when it comes to RPGs. In RPGs like *Final Fantasy*, you're generally you're glued to the one spot and have to sift through attack after attack until you find the one you're looking for. However in *Untold Legends* all you have to do is hack and slash until your opponents are nothing but ashes.

Collecting items dropped is the main way you strengthen your character. This is perhaps the biggest gripe we have with *Untold Legends*. You constantly have to stop the action to build up your character's strengths.

Slick combat and an intriguing plot

make it a compelling game. While the Wi-Fi multiplayer is initially fun, *Untold Legends* better played alone so you don't have to wait for them to level up. **Paul Frew**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Cute but effective
SOUND	08	Classic D&D tunes
GAMEPLAY	08	Great combat
LIFESPAN	08	Lengthy quest

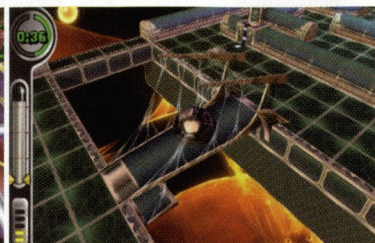
One of the rare PSP games that's better played solo.

08

PSP Play-test



Looks like the T-1000's leaving lung cookies again



Just like *Marble Madness*... but in space... and without the marbles



X PUZZLE

ARCHER MACLEAN'S MERCURY

The lovechild of Super Monkey Ball and the T-1000

DISTRIBUTOR: QV SOFTWARE ■ DEVELOPER: IGNITION ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.ignitionent.com

Mercury provides the perfect antidote to the gridlock of racing games crowding the PSP launch line-up. It's not that we don't dig racing games. They rev our engines, but they're always going to be even better at home on the big-screen. Puzzlers on the other hand are perfectly suited to gaming on the go. They're ideal in short bursts, and because they rely on brain-bending puzzles rather than realism, they don't suffer any loss in the shrinkage process.

Playing similarly to *Super Monkey Ball*, *Mercury* sees players navigating their liquid blob around increasingly complex mazes. The first major difference is that instead of controlling the mercury, the analogue stick is used to tilt the map itself. Because of the mercury's realistic physics,

the severity of the map's tilt will see the blob slide, drip, pool and contort through every crevice of the 72 maps. While many games have failed to tap the full potential of the PSP's analogue stick, *Mercury* features water-tight controls that show off just how versatile the stick is.

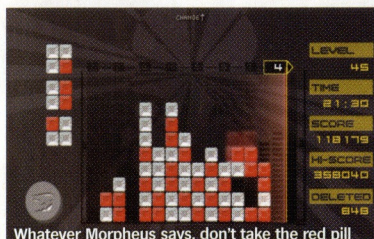
Early levels kick off with simple challenges like getting your blob to the finish line within a time limit, but it's not long before you're navigating across tight pathways, trying desperately not to fail the level because you let too many mercury drips fall over the edge. The difficulty cranks up another notch when puzzles include multiple coloured blobs that you must manipulate simultaneously. Throw in a two-player Wi-Fi race mode and you've got a seriously substantial package. **A** Narayan Pattison

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

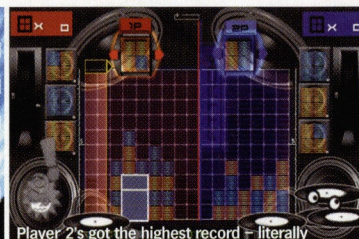
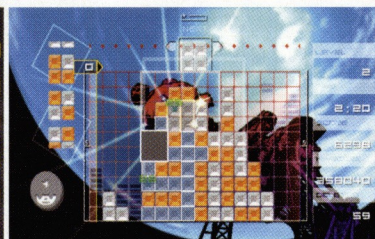
GRAPHICS	08	Stunning liquid metal effects
SOUND	06	The usual puzzle-style techno
GAMEPLAY	09	Intuitive, inventive and addictive
LIFESPAN	07	Lengthy but not overloaded with replay value

Next to a cold beer, *Mercury* is the OPS2 liquid of choice.

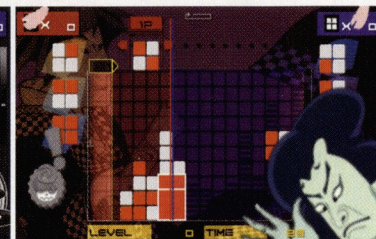
08



Whatever Morpheus says, don't take the red pill



Player 2's got the highest record - literally



X PUZZLE

LUMINES

Drop it like it's hot

DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT ■ DEVELOPER: Q ENTERTAINMENT ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.ubi.com

You can't make a falling brick puzzle without being compared to the venerable *Tetris* - it's inevitable. In fact, you can't really make a puzzle game in general without generating sighs from jaded gamers still lusting for the days when *Tetris* was so addictive they often forgot to eat.

We don't want to tout *Lumines* as a replacement for the time-honoured puzzler, but it's easily one of the best puzzle games we've played in recent memory. It's ingeniously simple in design, yet totally engaging. There are only two colours you need to worry about matching, all the blocks are two-by-two squares and there are only six different combinations. Blocks split apart if they're placed over a ledge and you'll need to create squares

to clear the blocks. Sounds easy? Well, that all depends how patient you are. The other element of *Lumines* is the timeline that crosses the board left to right with the beat of the music. Squares you've created will only be cleared when crossed by the timeline, so for slower tunes you'll have a chance to build on your squares for longer combos before they're cleared.

The multiplayer mode is also completely addictive. Not only do you battle each other for the highest score, you need to compete for the horizontal space using combos to shrink your opponent's play area.

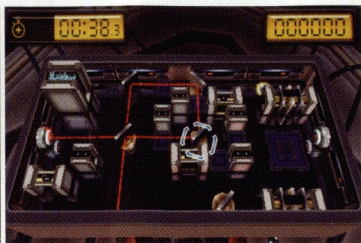
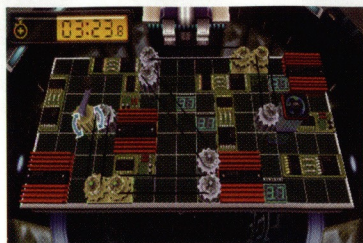
Simple and unassuming, anything more addictive than *Lumines* would get you dumped, fired, kicked out of the house and possibly arrested. **A** Luke Reilly

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Bright, clean and utilitarian
SOUND	10	A hypnotic array of varied music tracks
GAMEPLAY	09	Perfect puzzle fare, but no adjustable difficulty
LIFESPAN	10	A minute to learn - a life-time to master

Addictive from the second you begin - joins *Mercury* as one of the best puzzle games on any platform in a long, long time. Don't miss it!

08



X PUZZLE

SMART BOMB

Smarter than your average bomb

DISTRIBUTOR: EIDOS ■ DEVELOPER: CORE ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

No one is better qualified than Core to make a game about bombs, just look at *Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness*. Thankfully its first PSP creation is great fun.

Smart Bomb will have you defusing bombs in various mind-boggling ways. One way may be to line up mirrors to activate a laser, or you might have to guide a ball through a maze or even line up cogs so they can rotate a fan. They seem basic but what makes it difficult is solving the puzzle within the time limit.

There's also Wi-Fi play for up to four players, a story mode and extra challenge modes that should keep you

sweating for some time. It would be a shame if recent events prevented this solid puzzle title getting the attention it deserves. **Paul Frew**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	07	They get the job done
SOUND	07	Explosions are meaty
GAMEPLAY	08	Mind-bending puzzles
LIFESPAN	08	Loads of challenge

A solid puzzler that's simple to play but hard to master.

07



X STRATEGY

METAL GEAR ACID

More like Metal Gear Flacid...

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: KONAMI ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

Who wasn't excited when they heard that Solid Snake was set for an all new adventure on PSP? And who didn't raise an eyebrow and scratch their heads when they found out that the renowned action-stealth gameplay had been cut in favour of a turn-based card system?

Now rather than enduring 20 minutes of CODEC before you get into the action, you have to endure 20 minutes of CODEC before deciding which card to play.

Every action in the game is handled by a card. Once your turn is over you must then wait for any enemies in your vicinity to 'play their hand' so to speak.

It's even more frustrating knowing the PSP has the grunt to facilitate a real Solid Snake adventure, and yet Kojima-san has given us this. **Pity. Tristan Ogilvie**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	05	No complaints here
SOUND	06	No dialogue, okay effects
GAMEPLAY	05	Sluggish and uninteresting
LIFESPAN	07	Plenty of stages

Looks like Metal Gear, but plays like Snap.

06



X SPORTS

EVERYBODY'S GOLF

And they do mean 'everybody'

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: SONY ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

Let's face it; golf is a pretty simple sport. All you really need to know is that you have to get into the hole with as few strokes as possible (a bit like the 'sport' that Paul used to play when he was in the Navy).

Rather than aim for a realistic yet restrictive 'manual' control method like *Tiger Woods*, it employs the classic 'three button swing' metre like the golf games of old. The result is a game that anyone can pick up and play, and from there it's up to the individual how technical they want to get with the variety of club choices and shot selections.

Don't be fooled by the wide-eyed

cartoon characters, *Everybody's Golf* requires real skill for success and provides genuine satisfaction. This is *the* game for golfers on the go. **Tristan Ogilvie**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Cartoony and colourful
SOUND	07	Crisp ball-whacking
GAMEPLAY	09	Flawless control
LIFESPAN	09	Plenty to do

It's the best way to hit the links on a rainy day.

08

OTHER SEPTEMBER SIZZLERS

We've only given you a mere taste of what's in store for the PSP this September. Here's a list of some of the other games you'll be able to pick up on launch day or shortly thereafter – be sure to check back next month for our official verdicts!

V8 SUPERCARS 2 – You're going to need some heavy duty gloves to be able to hold this much grunt in your hands.

MEDIEVAL RESURRECTION – Any game where you can remove a limb and use it as a weapon is well worth the price of admission.

VIRTUA TENNIS WORLD TOUR – The game that took the 'L' out of 'VIRTUAL' and put the 'fun' into 'tennis' returns serve on PSP.

BURNOUT LEGENDS – Think of everything you've loved about the first three *Burnout* games, all crammed into the one UMD!

WORLD TOUR SOCCER – The beautiful game arrives on the beautiful handheld. Who fancies a wireless kick?

APE ACADEMY – Loads of minigames starring the manic monkeys from the *Ape Escape* series. It's B-A-N-A-N-A-S!

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION – Get set for pocket-sized ride-pimping as the original street racing franchise gets fast and furious on PSP.

NBA STREET SHOWDOWN – There'll be just as much dribbling going on off-screen as there will be on-court when you get a look at this stunning game of hoops.

DEATH JR – It was the first game ever revealed for PSP, and this cartoonish action-adventure looks set to enjoy a healthy life after death!

PSP Pre-play



"Don't mind me - I'm just dropping in"

"Trust me, I'm wheelie good at my job"

"Oi! Don't make me come over there!"

X ACTION

PURSUIT FORCE

More car-hopping than Paul's sister at the drive-in

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: BIGBIG STUDIOS ■ WEB: www.bigbigstudios.com ■ LAST SEEN: OPS2 #42 ■ RELEASE DATE: SPRING 2005

FUN FACT!

Developer Bigbig Studios was formed in 2001 by four ex-Codemasters employees, who previously worked on both the TOCA and Colin McRae Rally series'.

Who doesn't enjoy a high speed car chase? Nobody, that's who. Just ask the makers of *Bullitt*, *The Blues Brothers* or *Smokey and The Bandit*. OJ Simpson is certainly a big fan. And without car chases, the television show *COPS* would just be thirty minutes of fat police officers eating donuts and writing out parking tickets ("Officer needing assistance! I have a possible paper cut! Suspect is a single white sheet of paper with carbon copy backing! Repeat, CARBON - COPY - BACKING!").

Without car chases, *Pursuit Force* would be nothing. That's because the entire game is one heart-stopping, highway-wrecking car chase from start to finish. Sure, the action isn't limited to cars; there are also trucks, motorcycles, helicopters and speedboats. But no matter which mode of transport you take, you're always in a hurry.

Pursuit Force is kind of like *Burnout* with guns - but it goes beyond that. Yes, you do drive at ridiculously high speeds, shooting at and ramming enemy vehicles into submission, but your own vehicle is totally vulnerable too. When your car is worn out, there's

no way to fix it. So the only option is to hop out... at 200 kmph!

At any one moment you'll be weaving in and out of traffic, trying to get a good shot at a jeepload of gang members. But you'll be taking hits yourself, and all of a sudden you'll notice the car damage gauge flashing red in the lower left of the screen. But wait - since you took that last right turn onto the dirt track, the traffic has thinned out completely; there are no civilian cars nearby to commandeer. So you have no option but to scramble out the driver's side window and lunge forward desperately; the blast of your newly destroyed cop car hurling you directly onto the back of the enemy vehicle.

And still, you're not out of it yet. While clinging for life on the back of the swerving jeep, you must take out each of the gang members before you can claim the vehicle. But the gang members fire back, so you must constantly use the dodge button to hang down either side with your Doc Marten's grinding along the asphalt.

All of this action occurs within the first couple of minutes of *Pursuit Force*. We haven't even gone in to the times where you're mounting a gatling gun in a police chopper or swerving to shake the baddies off your own car. We haven't even mentioned how smooth and stunningly detailed the graphics are. That's because we're in a hurry, you see. We've got to get one last game in before the cleaner's kick us out of the office. It's that good! **Tristan Ogilvie**

CUT TO THE CHASE

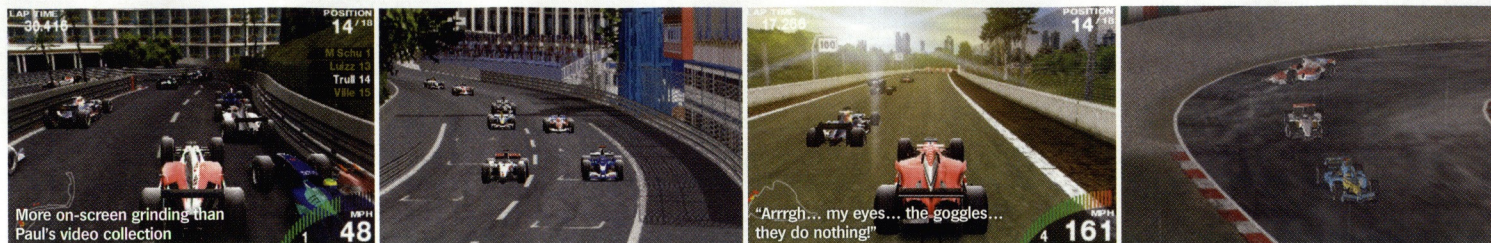
Older gamers out there might remember the coin-guzzling arcade game from the late 1980s, *Chase HQ*, which *Pursuit Force* draws a lot of its inspiration from. In *Chase HQ* you drove around a big American city in a snazzy turbo-charged Porsche 928, ramming enemy cars into submission. It was basically a nasty version of *OutRun*, and it did a good job of making you feel like a *Miami Vice*-style 'cop on the edge'. Then again, as you can see from the screenshot, we were pretty easily amused back then (that also explains Pauly Shore's career).



X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

PURSUIT FORCE is undoubtedly one of the most incredible PSP titles we've played so far. While you might be lured in by familiar titles such as *Wipeout* and *Ridge Racer*, we assure you that this will be worth chasing down.



X RACING

FORMULA ONE

"Honey, I shrunk Mr. Schumacher"

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** SONY ■ **DEVELOPER:** TRAVELLER'S TALES ■ **WEB:** www.yourpsp.com.au ■ **LAST SEEN:** FIRST LOOK ■ **RELEASE DATE:** SEPTEMBER

Like its PS2 counterpart, *Formula One* features all 18 official circuits, all 10 teams, the 20 current F1 cars and five unlockable classic cars. Unlike its big brother though, *Formula One* will focus on an arcade approach to the racing.

All the racing modes like Quick Race, Time Trial, Single Race and Championship will be tailored to take advantage of the quick pick up and play nature of PSP. Scenario Mode is the best example – a series of short challenges like reach 15th place before the first split, or pit within 60 seconds with a brake fault. These are challenging, but seem well suited to quick bursts of gameplay.

The AI seemed to have the odd brain explosion or two – we found it wasn't unusual to see three or four

opponents simultaneously leaving the track on tight bends. Hopefully this can be ironed out before release.

It also seems the bizarre TV Mode from the PS2 versions will be popping up again. Tell us if we're wrong, but we think the pleasure from watching a virtual race pan out while sitting on the bus has been seriously overestimated. Why watch when you can play?

Formula One will include support for up to eight players to play head-to-head via Wi-Fi on an ad hoc basis. It'll also feature the ability for players to download real grid line-ups and qualifying times taken directly from the 2005 season as the race events happen this year. This means that F1 PSP gamers will easily be able to race the season as it unfolds. If a team or driver was

disqualified, or happened to do particularly well in a qualifying session, (and you're incredibly dedicated) you could choose to update the game with the correct stats and have the correct cars in the correct order on the starting grid. **Luke Reilly**

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

FORMULA ONE may only engage genuine F1 fans, but Traveller's Tales looks like it will succeed in bringing a good-looking F1 game to the PSP.



X FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

CODED ARMS

An FPS on the PSP? OMG!

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** ATARI ■ **DEVELOPER:** KONAMI ■ **WEB:** www.konami.com ■ **LAST SEEN:** OPS2 #42 ■ **RELEASE DATE:** SPRING 2005

Not only is *Coded Arms* a completely original game built from the ground up for the PSP platform, it also has the honour of being the first first-person shooter to grace Sony's portable wonder (and hopefully there's many more to come).

It's also interesting because Konami isn't really known for producing FPS games, but from what we've seen so far the giant Japanese developer must have done its research because *Coded Arms* is looking more attractive than a honey sandwich (with the Hilton sisters as the bread).

The story takes place in a sci-fi setting with your character 'jacking in' to a cyberspace environment in a similar style to *The Matrix* or *Ghost in the Shell*. Your task is to hack into secret government files in order to

trade them for enormous cash rewards.

Thus your enemies are all monster-like computer programs that attempt to thwart you at every turn. So it's just as well that you've got access to over 30 weapons in the game, from the usual assault and sniper rifles through to powerful rocket launchers and devastating flamethrowers.

The only possible glitch in the program could be the control system. With only one analogue thumbstick (as opposed to two on the PS2's Dual Shock), it's not going to be an easy task to get the look and movement right on the PSP. However, we're assured that the control scheme will be fully customisable, so individual gamers should be able to tailor a control set to their tastes –

possibly using the face buttons to move, the thumbstick to look and the shoulder buttons to shoot.

Coded Arms is certainly shaping up to be a handheld bundle of joy for FPS fans – we're watching this one with interest. **Tristan Ogilvie**

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

CODED ARMS is easily going to be the most technically advanced first-person shooter to grace any handheld console so far, but how well it plays remains to be seen.



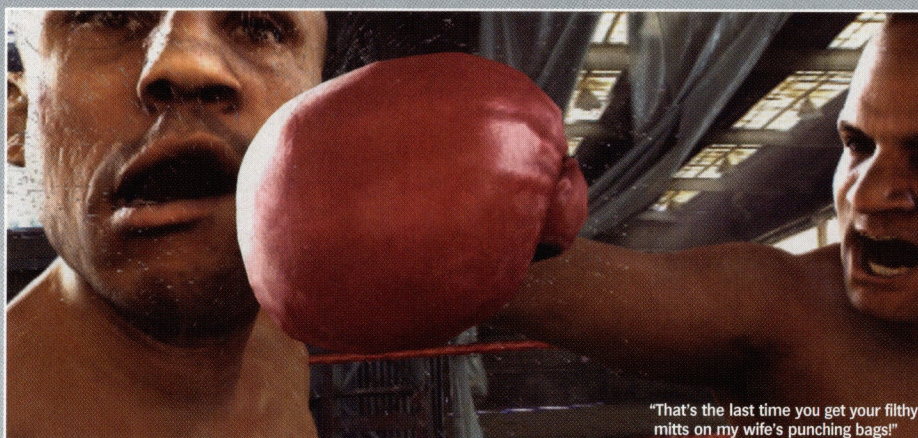
PS3 Play-test

WORDS: NARAYAN PATTISON

Sony's wonder machine may still be a good few months from release, but we're not going to let that stop us from scouring the planet for every last drop of PS3 info!

EA's next generation

The recently confirmed *Need for Speed Most Wanted* and *The Godfather* have joined EA's previously announced PS3 launch titles (*Fight Night*, *NBA Live*, *Tiger Woods*, *Madden*).



"That's the last time you get your filthy mitts on my wife's punching bags!"

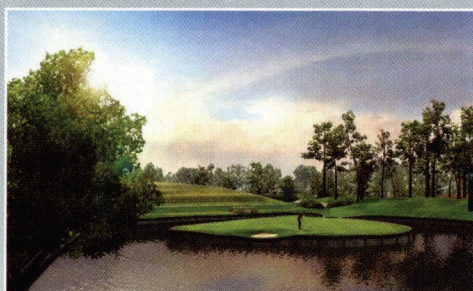


Grand Theft Auto 4?

This image was recently leaked onto the net and claimed to be an early *GTA4* shot. Considering how tightly guarded Rockstar has been with the last three *GTA* games we seriously doubt it's a legit screen. If the Internet rumours can be believed, *GTA4* will have a map six times as big as *GTA: San Andreas* and will feature a strong online focus. Even if it's not real, we're still excited!



Rumour has it that a second development team has been brought in just for Brando's cheeks



Dead Rising

Capcom's new zombie-fest may not be the deepest game on the block, but carving up endless waves of zombies looks like so much fun you won't see us complaining. As you can see in the screen above, part of the action occurs inside the fruit and veg section of a supermarket. There's going to be a red light special on zombie brains!



Back in the Killzone

We know we've already given Guerrilla's astounding *Killzone* demo lots of coverage in previous issues but we just had to share this latest batch of beauties with you. *Killzone*'s nasty melee attacks and the frighteningly realistic explosion effects are being shown off this month.



"Ewww! Metallic green is so last season!" hissed our resident style expert

That's Unreal!

Epic's *Unreal Tournament 2007* was said to barely make the PS3 break a sweat but even in this early state it's got our trigger fingers itchier than Paul after his last bikini wax. Epic's *Unreal* graphics engine has also been used to create a bunch of tech demos that show off the level of graphics we can expect on the next generation – cop an eyeful of these stunning screens and try not to pass out.



First launch title

Bandai is the first developer to confirm its plans for a PS3 launch title, *Mobile Suit Gundam*. Pictured above is an image taken from the *Gundam* demo Bandai showed at Sony's May 2005 press conference. We expect the final game to exceed these early visuals.



Final Fantasy VII

The first 3D *Final Fantasy* title, *FFVII* on PSone, may soon be receiving one hell of a facelift on PS3. Square Enix revealed that the *FFVII* PS3 demo (which showed a famous scene in the game where Cloud jumps down from a train re-rendered with stunning realism on PS3) only tapped into a fraction of the PS3's full power. Wowzers – we need to sit down. If it goes ahead, a PS3 *Final Fantasy* game will be created by many members of the *FFX* team.



"Ha ha! Your bullets are no match for my body armour and – wait, I forgot my helmet, didn't I?"

PS3 Top Ten

Ten reasons why PS3 will rule gaming!

1. Photo-realistic graphics

We all say that it's the gameplay that counts and not the graphics, but one look at these games and you'll need a PS3 more than oxygen.

2. Dual HD TVs

Why restrict yourself to one TV when you can game across two TVs. There are plenty of uses for this feature and plus it just looks so money!

3. Blu-ray discs

As well as CDs and DVDs, PS3 can play Blu-ray discs. These babies can hold six times the data of DVDs and also support high definition movies.

4. Wireless controllers

Never again worry about losing friends in tragic controller strangulation accidents. You can connect up to seven controllers wirelessly via Bluetooth.

5. PSP

Use your PSP as another wireless controller for the PS3, or swap content between them via Wi-Fi.

6. Detachable harddrive

Just downloaded or created your own *Gran Turismo 5* map and you're heading over to a mate's place? Just bring your harddrive along.

7. HD EyeToy

Scan yourself in games and send and receive high definition video feeds from around the world.

8. Internet

Play your friends online or download anything from game content to MP3s – it's all good. Just don't let your mum find those *Debbie Does Dallas* files.

9. DTS sound

The PS3 supports full DTS surround sound for games and movies.

10. Backwards compatibility

There's no need to ditch your old PSone and PS2 classics with the PS3's backwards compatibility. Your old favourites will also look even better in shiny new HD.

PS3 Release and Price

You can expect to see PlayStation 3 on sale in Australia as early as March 2006 and for as little as \$699. It's important to bear in mind that the PS3's local price and launch date have yet to be confirmed. This is based on information released about the Sony America's PS3 plans and how closely the Aussie release date and price followed the PS2's US launch.



HAIR BRUSHES ARE SO LAST YEAR

www.singstargame.com

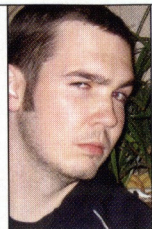
**New SingStar Pop featuring
30 original Australian and
International tracks**

fun,
anyone?
PlayStation.2



SingStar™ Pop © 2004-2005 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by London Studio.
"SingStar" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. EyeToy® is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All Rights Reserved. KPS1655/0504

Play-test



WELCOME!

You may be happy to know that thanks to *EyeToy: Kinetic* Paul has lost his beer gut and has been trying to get us all on the fitness bandwagon. Maybe it's just us, but we're allergic to sweaty blokes – our good friend Paul included. Speaking of

sweaty blokes though, we've also had a bash at the much-improved *AFL Premiership 2005*. It's all about sport and exercise this issue – now if you'll excuse us, Paul's trying to get the receptionist to squeeze his EyeToy-honed guns again...

LUKE REILLY
REVIEWS EDITOR

REVIEW CHARTER

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE'S reviews are the best in the business. Our squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone. And we love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our comments and scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here in Australia and overseas. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10** Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10** A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10** Highly recommended
- 07/10** Good, solid fare that's well worth a look
- 06/10** Better than average, and acceptable for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10** An average game
- 04/10** Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10** Extremely disappointing
- 02/10** To be avoided
- 01/10** Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing, so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to games that score that magic 10/10. This score indicates gaming of simply incredible quality!

The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!

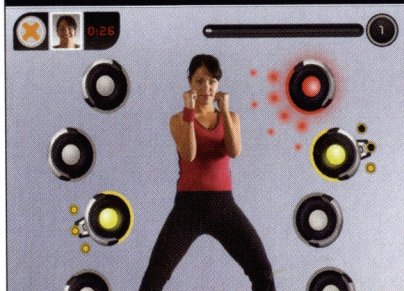
The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.



AFL PREMIERSHIP 2005

An Aussie institution returns – break out a slab, kick back and relax!

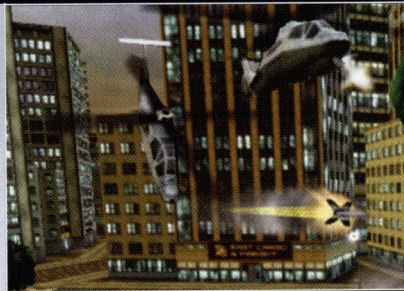
66



EYETOY: KINETIC

Get fit in front of the TV!

70



THE INCREDIBLE HULK: ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION

Bruce Banner is back on the angry pills!

72



FANTASTIC FOUR

Super heroes or super zeroes?

74

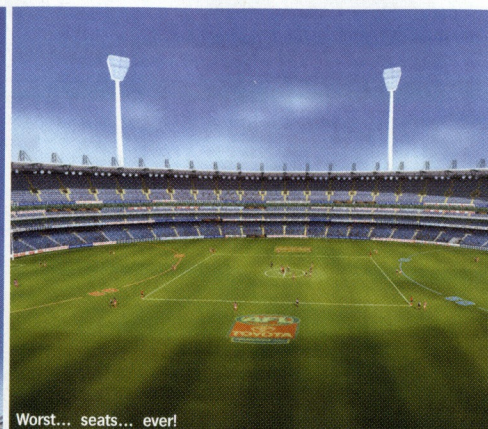
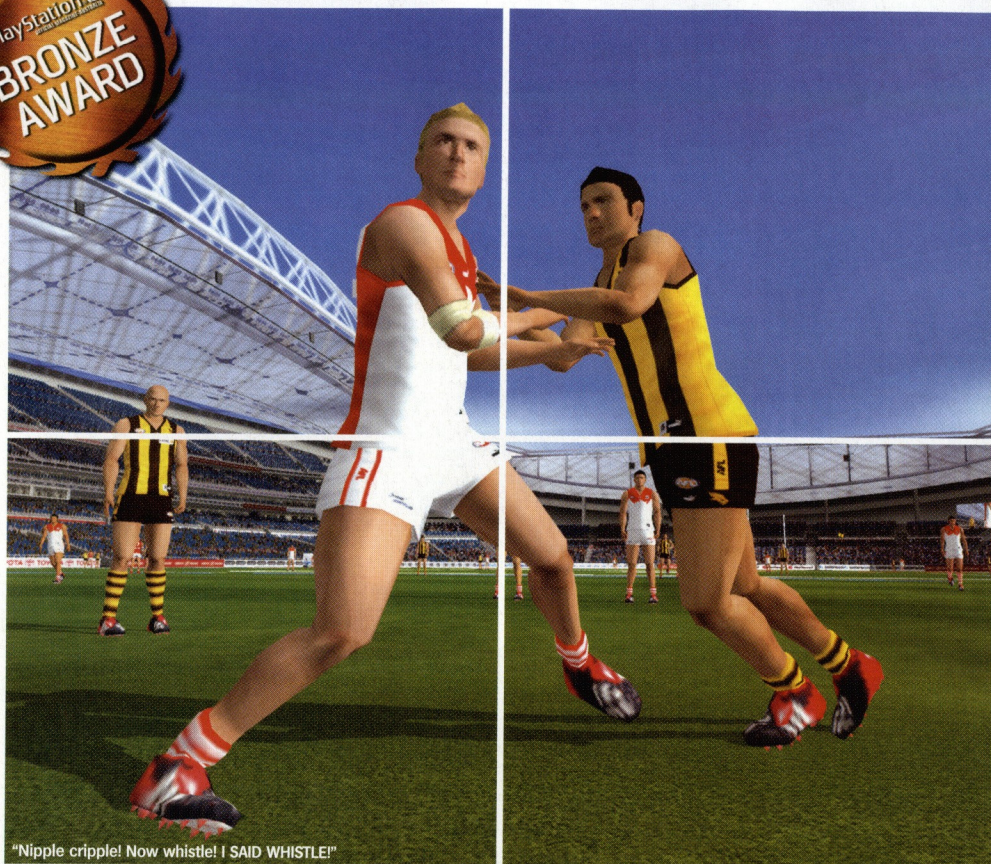


BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS 2

Keep on truckin'

76

Play-test



Worst... seats... ever!



The Right Said Fred reunion concert was far from a sell-out

"Nipple cripple! Now whistle! I SAID WHISTLE!"

SPORTS

AFL PREMIERSHIP 2005

Finally an AFL game that hits the mark!

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: IRGurus ■ PRICE: \$99.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: AUGUST ■ WEB: www.irgurus.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: YES ■ ONLINE: YES

BACK STORY

IRGurus originated in 1996 with the motto "gameplay is everything". Unfortunately that motto must have slipped the developer's mind for its previous AFL games because they fell short of the mark. Thankfully IR Gurus is living up to its motto with AFL Premiership 2005.

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Every other AFL game

WORSE THAN

Rugby 2005

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

The controls are much more intuitive

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

More detail in the player models

We'll be the first to admit, we had our doubts about AFL Premiership 2005. Just like John Howard, we'd been burned by so many promises that were never delivered. When Acclaim bit the dust and Sony scooped up the AFL license and started making a bunch of new promises, we decided to wait and see before jumping around like an airhead cheerleader. Now that we've played through it though, we're sorry we had any doubts because AFL Premiership 2005 delivers on nearly all its promises and even throws in a few surprises.

CRUSH THE LOSERS

The biggest problem with every other AFL game has been the unresponsive controls. There has usually been at least a five second delay between hitting the button and the desired action taking place on the screen. Tackling someone, taking a mark or even shoulder charging an opponent would always end in the same result – your controller violently bouncing off the walls.

This problem is a thing of the past in AFL Premiership 2005. IRGurus has simplified the control setup making it easier to perform the basics like marking, kicking, passing and shoving. That's right, you'll be able to knock all your favourite players on their arse with a well-timed shove. It's not just a gimmick either – it's handy to use when your opponent is going for a kick, because it throws them off balance and it increases the odds of them missing the goal. Of course, bumping into them is not always fun. You're going to want to hurt them – and now you can.

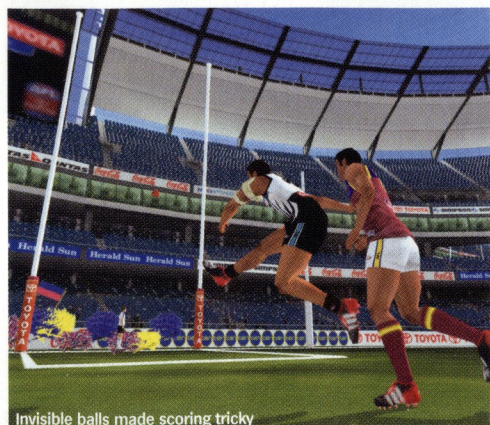
Pressing will do a regular tackle on your opponent – not like the soft cuddles Luke gives his teddy bear either. You can hear the impact of bodies clashing together and the thump when they're taken to the ground. However, you can still take it up another notch. By holding while pressing you can do an aggressive tackle, which is more likely to knock the ball loose or injure them – or both.

Injuries have different degrees in AFL

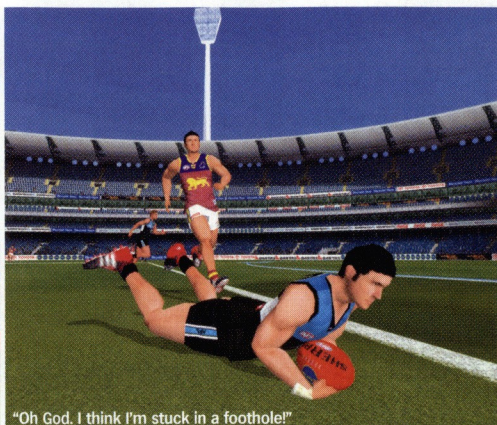
Premiership 2005 too. You can injure the key areas of your opponent – arms and legs – and it will have an effect on how they play (provided they've got the balls to even stay on the field). For example, if you injure the opposition's go-to guy then he's going to have a lot of problems lining up his kick with a busted ankle. Not that we're encouraging taking out your opponents for good, but it's good to see that the players are far from invincible warriors who can't be hurt. Overall the gameplay is already miles ahead of what AFL Live Premiership Edition was. Everything about it is an improvement and matches succeed in bringing home much more of a real event's atmosphere.

EYE-GOUGE

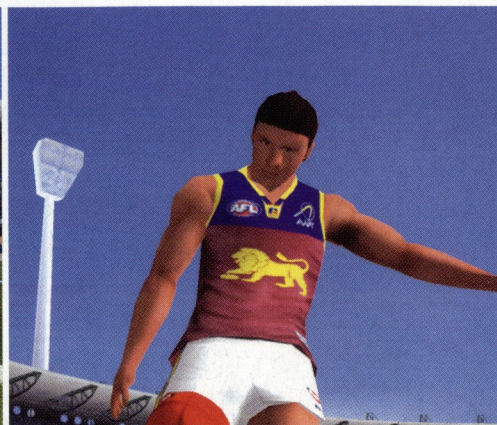
Unfortunately, while AFL Premiership 2005 plays very similarly to the real deal, the visuals aren't exactly 'picture perfect'. Graphically the player models are nothing spectacular, lacking specific details like realistic muscle definition. Luckily the fluid animations make it easy to forgive



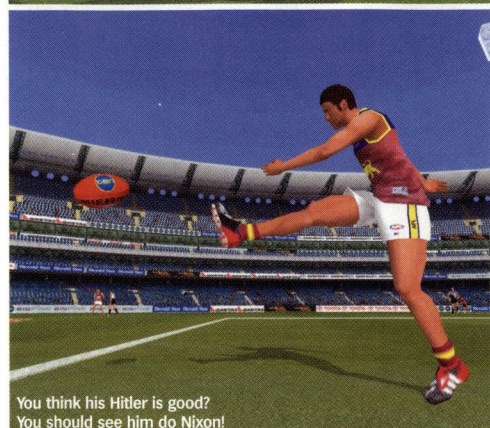
Invisible balls made scoring tricky



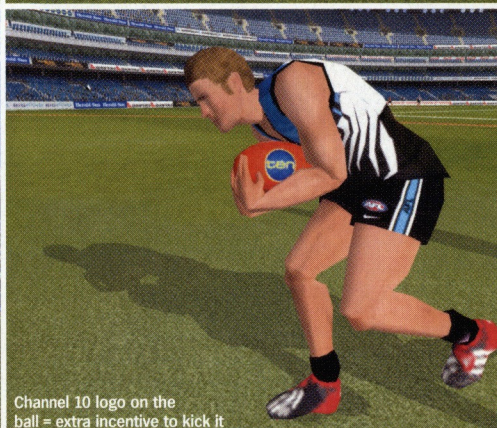
"Oh God. I think I'm stuck in a foothole!"



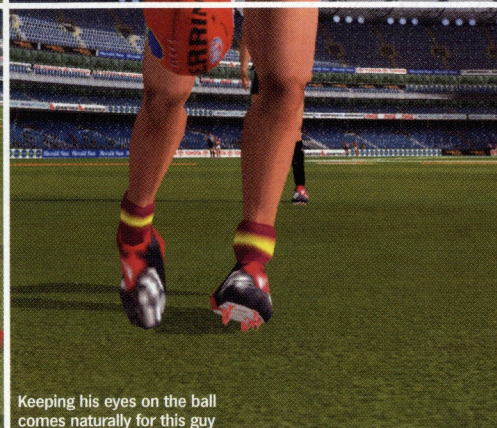
Keeping his eyes on the ball comes naturally for this guy



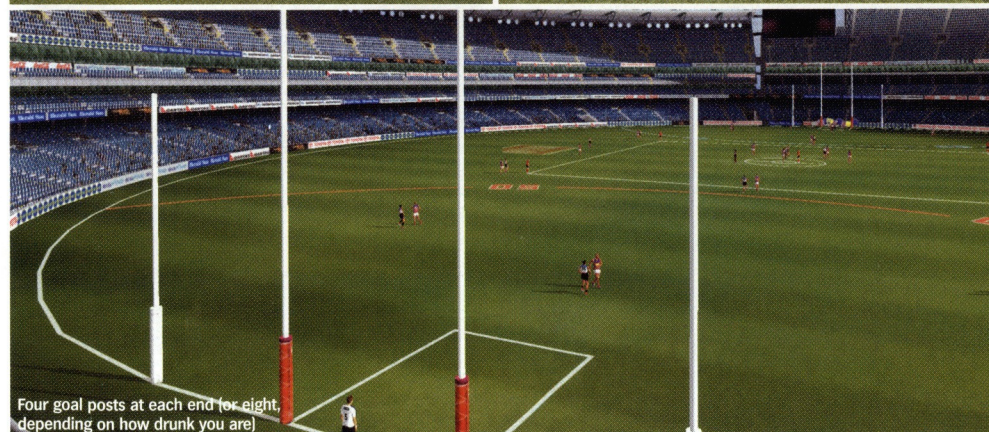
You think his Hitler is good?
You should see him do Nixon!



Channel 10 logo on the ball = extra incentive to kick it



Keeping his eyes on the ball comes naturally for this guy



Four goal posts at each end (for eight, depending on how drunk you are)

ASK THE EXPERT

No one is better to give advice about playing an AFL game than an actual AFL player. So we asked Vice-Captain of the Fremantle Dockers, Paul Hasleby, for advice for surviving in the AFL world.

OPS2: You've won many Best and Fairest awards over the years, any advice you can give us on how to score one?

Paul: Stay fit and healthy so you can make it through the whole season and make sure your team is successful.

OPS2: Is there a particular move we could pull that would get the crowd behind us?

Paul: Usually a high mark or snaps from the boundaries are the best way to excite people.

OPS2: When do you guys get time to play games?

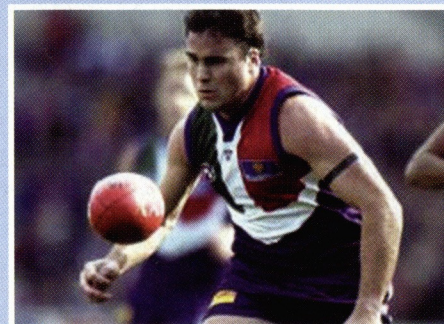
Paul: Usually between training sessions. We have a PS2 at the ground so we'll do some training, have our meetings and then play some games.

OPS2: What do you play?

Paul: The AFL game of course but we also like FIFA and WWE Smackdown! Vs Raw too.

OPS2: What's the one thing you think the next AFL game needs to capture to make it even more authentic?

Paul: I think more goal celebrations and high mark animations. They're really what makes the game.



the poorly sculptured models. Players will shove each other for possession, they'll fly off the backs of opponents for the marks – even the umpires have been recreated well. The crowds haven't been forgotten either. They will wave signs, streamers and whatever else they can get their hands on. Crowds will also differ according to the game. For games that have a classic rivalry like Essendon vs Collingwood, the crowd will be much larger and contain a more vocal crowd than a match between two teams without any history.

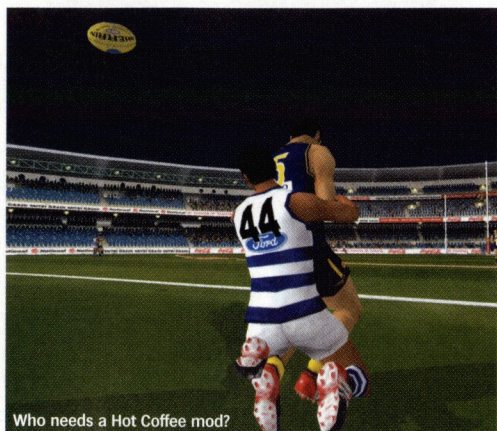
All the stadiums are also accurately detailed. The only thing that's missing is their proper names, but every advertisement, seat and playing turf is in the game. There are only two weather variants – and only one of them has a big effect on the way you play. In the wet the ball will be harder to handle and players will glide around the ground like they're on a Slip 'N' Slide. *AFL Premiership 2005* may not be as pretty as the Mona Lisa, but it gets the job done.

A LITTLE SEASONING

The Season mode has been given an overhaul since *AFL Live* and is now more authentic than ever. You'll once again kick off the season with the Wizard Cup, but now when you jump into the regular season you'll notice a few differences after the matches. You'll see a list of injuries and players who had to face the AFL tribunal. This is no joke either. You can find yourself in front of the judiciary for striking, dirty maneuvers and even taking out an umpire. So you better watch yourself on the field because it will all make a difference on whether your best player gets the Brownlow medal or your team's left holding the wooden spoon.

Season mode even has a stat tracking feature that combines with the rankings given to each team. You can now improve your team's performance based on how well you play. Keep in mind though that other team's rankings will also increase and decrease

Play-test



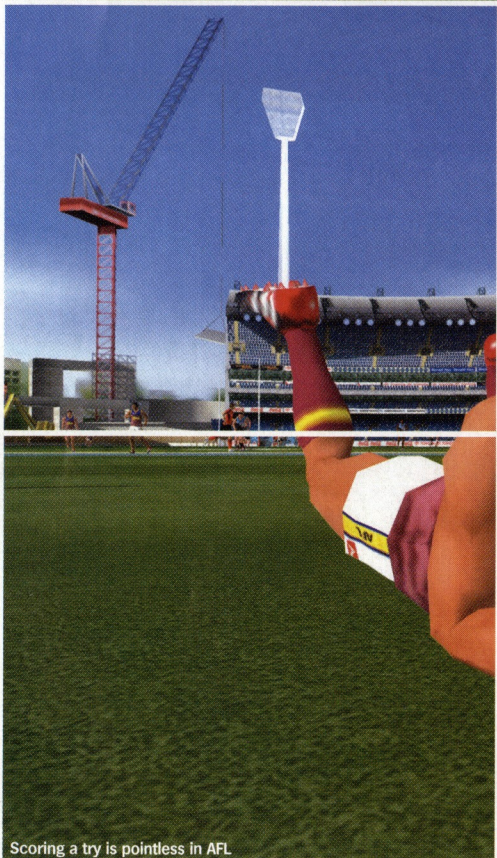
Who needs a Hot Coffee mod?



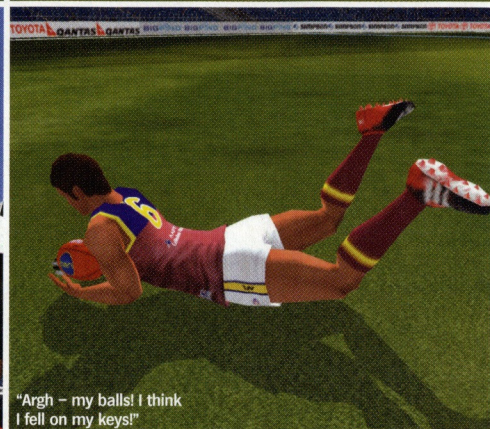
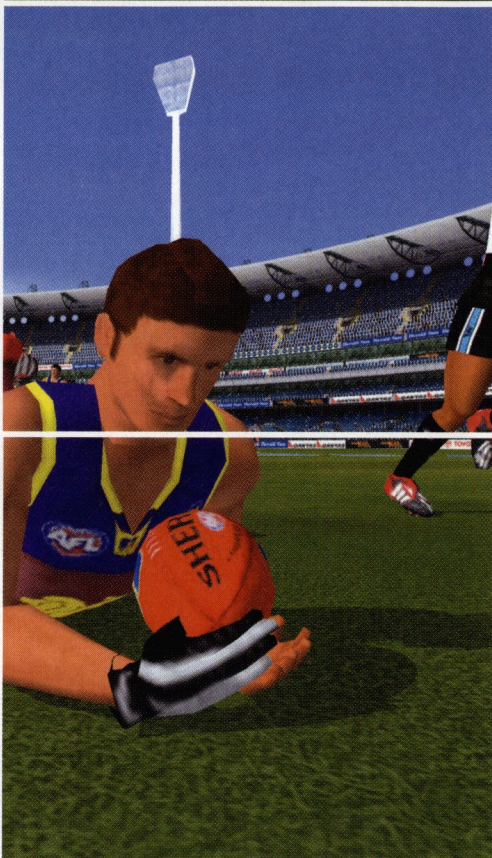
"Hands off, boys – this Mark is taken!"



Scoring in front of 100 thousand people. Now he knows how Paris Hilton feels!



Scoring a try is pointless in AFL



"Argh – my balls! I think I fell on my keys!"

WHO'S THAT HANDSOME DEVIL?

You could be the one kicking the winning goal for your team. How you ask? By using AFL Premiership 2005's face masking feature. Using the EyeToy, you can capture your face and put it on any player in the game. We took OPS2 staff writer Paul Frew and put him on a Bulldogs player and then put him up against the Demons. Then we made a game of it. The quickest to injure Paul got the rest of the day off. It only took three minutes for Naz to organize for the stretchers to be brought out. Paul's looking forward to seeing him at the judiciary on Monday.



accordingly. They all play on the field as well as their real life counterparts too – the Bulldogs will move the ball around the field like lightning, the Swans will do their best to get it to big Bazza immediately (and don't even get us started on the Lions).

FOURSOME

Of course, you can even the odds on teams like Brisbane if you've got mates around. AFL Premiership 2005 will feature four-player multiplayer with both Multitap support and an online mode. You can team up with your mates and play four-player cooperative, two vs two or any mixture of two-to-four players.

It's quite a different experience when playing AFL Premiership 2005 against your mates, especially when you've all got your faces on players in the game (see 'Who's that Handsome Devil?' box). Nothing's better than tackling your mate and

rubbing his face into the turf.

The action doesn't slow down online either, so you should have no problems kicking goals and taking marks over your broadband connection. Again you can get stuck into it with two-to-four players – It's certainly satisfying to take out an opponent who's living on the other side of Australia but thinks he's Gary Ablet.

It's about time an AFL game has been done right. It may not be perfect but it's a great game that improves vastly on previous AFL titles. IRGurus' main goal for AFL Premiership 2006 should be for all players to be more detailed and instantly recognisable. We'd also like to see more variants in the weather and more aggressive AI, but that's just nitpicking. AFL Premiership 2005 is the giant step AFL fans have been looking for. It's an Aussie game made by Aussies, and it's everything we've wanted and more. **Paul Frew**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	05	Better than last year but far from perfect
SOUND	07	Great commentary and effects
GAMEPLAY	08	Massive improvements – very playable
LIFESPAN	08	It'll get you through the off-season

Finally the AFL game we all deserve. Leap onto someone else's shoulders and grab it now.

08



MotoGP 4

Official Game Of MotoGP

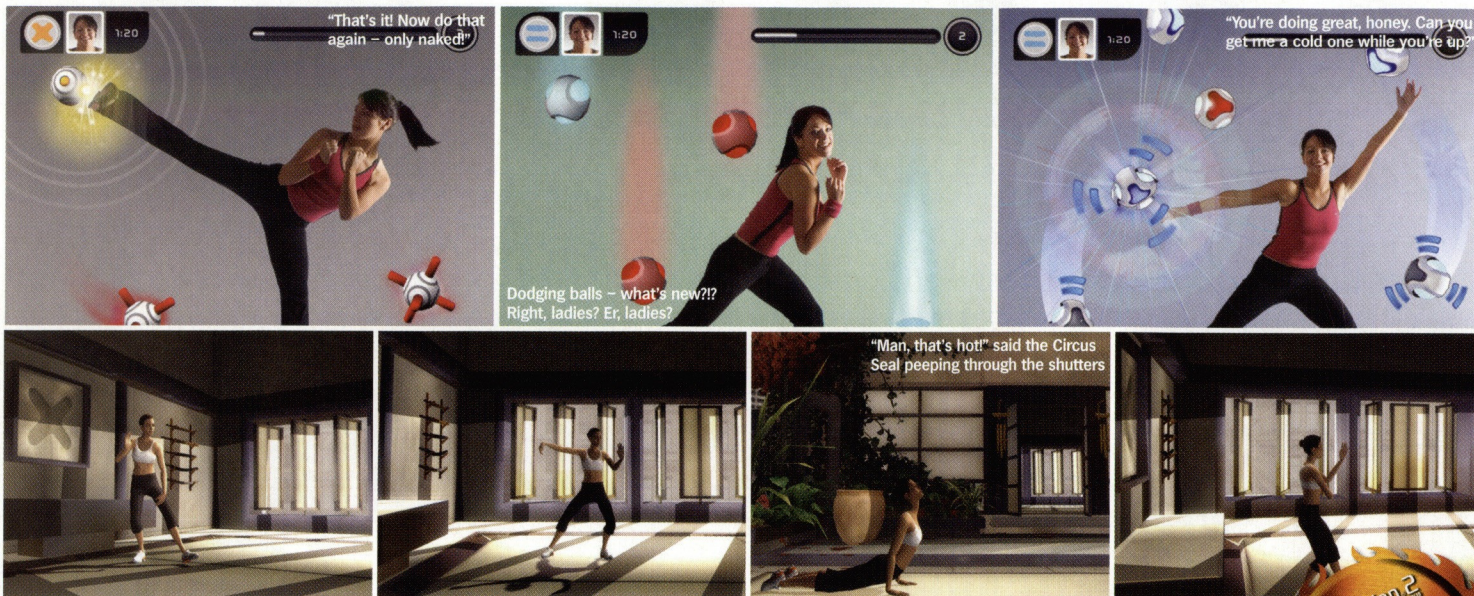
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✖ EYETOY



EYETOY: KINETIC

Is it time to cancel your gym membership?

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: LONDON STUDIO ■ PRICE: \$59.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: AUGUST ■ WEB: www.eyetoy.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: NO ■ ONLINE: NO

✖ BACK STORY

When it's not coming up with crazy new ideas for the EyeToy, London Studio is working on improving The Getaway series. Currently we know it's knee deep in the PS3 version of The Getaway and wrapping up work on EyeToy: Play 3 for the PS2 – two must-have games.

It's not exactly 'the money or the box' when deciding to lift weights or play videogames. But what if you could combine both? Would you pump iron then? Naturally we don't need to because we're already as fit as body builders but for the rest of you, EyeToy: Kinetic will help you get you into shape.

While you can just play the minigames like a regular EyeToy game, the personal trainer mode is where you'll get real results. You'll select between either the saucy female trainer or the authoritative male trainer. After answering some standard questions about your lifestyle, your trainer will then work out a 12-week schedule for you. They'll set specific workout days aside for you, and may God have mercy on your soul if you miss one of those days. Kinetic uses the PS2's internal clock to monitor your progress so it will know when you miss a session and it will remind you throughout your workout that you've fallen behind.

The games are simple enough to follow as Kinetic disguises some of the old EyeToy games into aerobic workouts. The difficulty though will vary based on the type of schedule you're on. For example, if you're a beginner then you will do very simple games like hitting falling balls and sliding objects from one side to the other. Intermediate schedules will consist of more intense routines that will involve more flexibility and athleticism, like jumping for stars. Finally, the advanced routines are for the top class

athletes who can do it all, and then some. So no matter what body shape or condition you're in then there's a routine for you. It really is a case of something for everyone.

Unfortunately, the trainers are a little disappointing, as they don't inspire you as much as we'd hoped. So you really have to motivate yourself. However, the variety of games and the way Kinetic mixes them up so you're working out with different games each sessions stops it from getting old. Although once your 12 weeks is up you'll no doubt be looking for something different to flex your muscles on. London Studio could prevent this from happening in a possible sequel by adding a larger variety of minigames and maybe ones that aren't similar to those in Play and Play 2.

You really only need to play Kinetic for around 30-45 minutes a day, three times a week – which is really nothing when you think about it. That's how long it would take CJ to walk from Los Santos to Las Venturas and back (don't quote us on that though, we always get sidetracked at the casinos in Venturas). While you do have to motivate yourself to take the game out and throw it in your PS2, you will be satisfied with the results if you stick with the program.

While there are a handful of areas Kinetic can improve on – we're hoping to see a more energetic workout next time – for now we're happy EyeToy: Kinetic's hit the spot us. Our burgeoning beer guts are ancient history. **Paul Frew**

PUSH IT

The personal trainers in Kinetic aren't exactly the most energetic and bubbly people we've met. They can't help it though, they're from England. Here are some motivational personal trainers we'd like to see.



Richard Simmons

Luke made us include this guy – we think it's the spandex. Richard is the fittest 57 year old around – if anyone can motivate us, he can.



Carmen Electra

No, we don't just want to perv – Carmen brought out the Fit To Strip workout routine – one of the greatest movies ever made!



Mr Burns

Mr Burns is committed to seeing you shed pounds fast and efficiently. If you don't then at least he'll pay for the liposuction. Excellent.

✖ LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Going to the gym

WORSE THAN

Sitting on the couch watching Aerobics Oz Style

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

The minigames provide a good workout

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

More energy. Pump it up!

✖ OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Very polished, drab at times
SOUND	07	Great workout tunes
GAMEPLAY	07	The minigames can get samey
LIFESPAN	08	Put in the effort and get results!

Cancel your gym membership and work up a sweat with your PS2.



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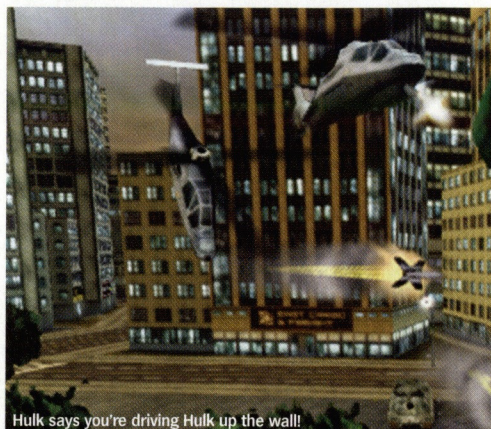
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Hulk says you're driving Hulk up the wall!



Hulk says Hulk loves speaking in third-person!



Hulk says Hulk doesn't like doing the robot!



FUN FACT!

The Hulk's alter-ego is known as Bruce Banner, however the name was changed to David for the TV Show in the '70s because Bruce sounded too sissy.

X ACTION

THE INCREDIBLE HULK: ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION

Not Hulk Hogan, you know, that big green guy

DISTRIBUTOR: Vivendi ■ DEVELOPER: Radical Entertainment ■ PRICE: \$69.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: September ■ WEB: www.hulkgames.com ■ 60HZ MODE: No ■ WIDESCREEN: Yes ■ SURROUND SOUND: Yes ■ ONLINE: No

X BACK STORY

Radical Entertainment was the first company to make a decent Simpsons game and now it's using a similar concept for Ultimate Destruction. Its next title, Scarface: The World Is Yours also uses the same free-roaming style gameplay. We guess if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

X LAB TEST

BETTER THAN
HULK

WORSE THAN
SPIDER-MAN 2

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

Smashing stuff and seeing the destruction you've caused is a blast

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

The graphics look average compared to today's top titles

The Hulk is only good for one thing – smashing stuff. It's no coincidence that smashing stuff is exactly what *Ultimate Destruction* is all about. It's not brain surgery – you're going to destroy everything in sight, and then some. Sounds cool right? Well, not really.

While it's definitely cool that almost everything in *Ultimate Destruction* can be demolished and your path of demolition is detailed to the last footprint, graphically *Ultimate Destruction* doesn't hold a flame to any of the top games hitting shelves these days. The PS2 has been out for five years now and developers do know how to push it to its limits. Look at gorgeous games like *God of War*, *Metal Gear Solid 3* and *Burnout 3* to see exactly what we're talking about. New games should be making the PS2 work harder than ever, but *Ultimate Destruction* doesn't seem to make it break a sweat. So why does *Ultimate Destruction* look so out-of-date? Size can't be an issue because *GTA: San Andreas* is at least five times the size and

it still looks impressive. There's no real excuse for the poor visuals but fortunately there's still fun to be had with it.

For a game that's all about smashing stuff up it's a good thing that *Ultimate Destruction*'s missions are designed well enough so the concept doesn't get old too fast. There are two mission types – story and side missions. The story missions tell the tale of The Hulk trying to find a cure for his curse while avoiding threats like the military and classic foes from the comics. While the majority of these involve you destroying something, there is a purpose behind every mission and you actually feel like your actions play a part in how the story progresses. The side missions are the equivalent to the side tasks in games like *GTA: San Andreas*. These aren't totally necessary unless you want to get that 100% completion rating and some extra smash points.

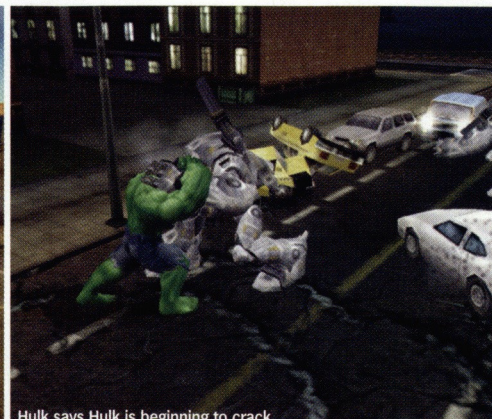
Smash points are what allow you to buy new abilities and combos for The Hulk. This concept confused everyone in the office.

Where does Hulk go to buy these abilities? The Hulk store? Anyway, all the moves are enjoyable and there are several classics – including the Iron Fists, where Hulk tears apart a vehicle and uses the remains as boxing gloves, the Sonic Clap, which emits a blast when he slaps his giant paws together and the Elbow Drop where he turns into WWE superstar The Rock and drops the elbow right into the sternum of unlucky foes. There're over 150 combo moves so you'll have no trouble finding a few favourites.

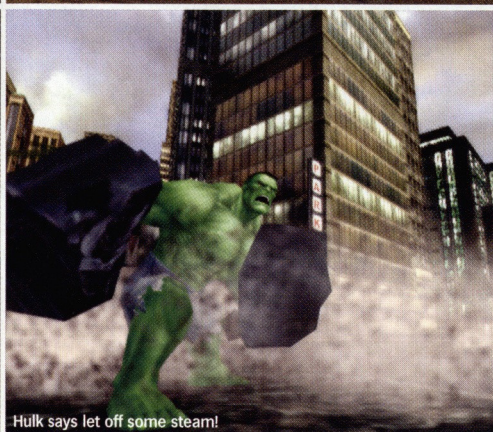
The Hulk has plenty of other cool tricks up his green sleeves. As we said, almost everything in *Ultimate Destruction* can be turned into rubble within a matter of seconds, and there is more than one way that you can do this. You can use your brute strength and simply engage your fists to smash things to pieces. Or you can grab a missile launcher off the back of a truck and hurl rockets like javelins. You can even just pick up objects off the street and launch them at targets if that's how you roll. The Hulk can run along walls



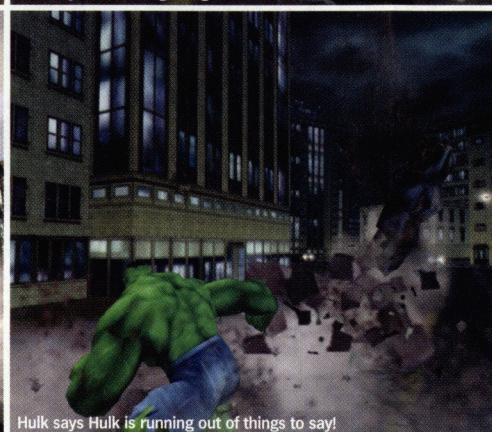
Hulk says keep on trucking!



Hulk says Hulk is beginning to crack...



Hulk says let off some steam!



Hulk says Hulk is running out of things to say!

like a ninja and fly through the air like Michael Jordan. There's so much to learn and so much to smash that you could play through it a few times and still not have used everything he's capable of.

The best sections of *Ultimate Destruction* are easily the boss fights. If you thought the green badass was big, you should see who he picks fights with. You'll be going nose to nose with some of Hulk's classic foes like Abomination and Mercy plus some new villains that looked like they got lost on the way to the audition for the film *Robots*. The reason these fights are so great is because your opponent is usually so massive that Hulk looks like an angry garden gnome next to them. They're classic David vs Goliath type battles, and they're good fun. Once you start brawling it turns into a scene from *War of the Monsters*. You and your foe will be tearing the house down – literally.

So, other than the visuals everything is smooth sailing. Surely that can't make too much of impact right? Wrong. When playing *Ultimate Destruction* there are many times where you'll sit back and wonder why the visuals look so dated. How Hulk fails to match the graphical quality of its prequel, or even five year-old launch titles, baffles us. It's a shame too, because the story missions are well designed, the side missions are mostly fun and there are over 150 combos to learn – which is more than you'll need to lay waste to an entire city. However because the graphics are such a distraction, it's hard to enjoy the action. As games continue to evolve in both graphics and gameplay, developers need to make the appropriate advances to keep moving forward. *Ultimate Destruction's* weaknesses are even harder to stomach when you consider how many fantastic AAA PS2 titles are now crowding shelves for the bargain Platinum price of \$29.95. **Paul Frew**

THE BIG GREEN BOMB

Rumours are sweeping through Hollywood about the sequel to *Hulk*, 2003's biggest disappointment. Here's some of the buzz that's going around:

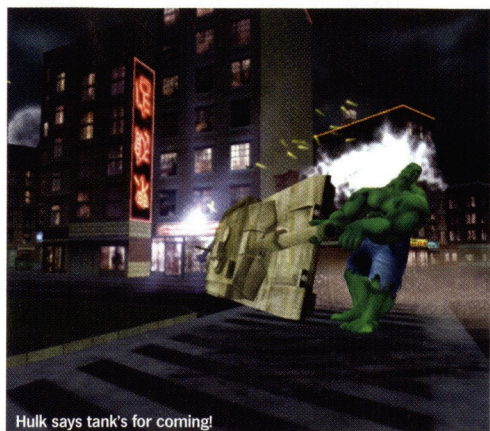
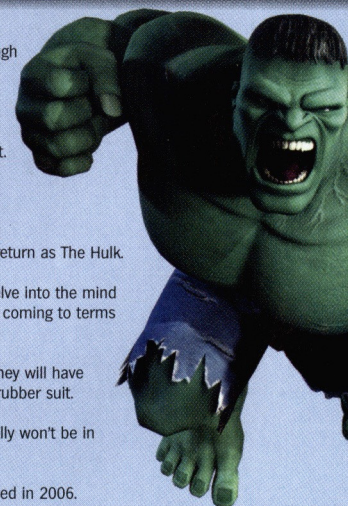
Eric Bana will return as The Hulk.

The film will delve into the mind of the creature coming to terms with himself.

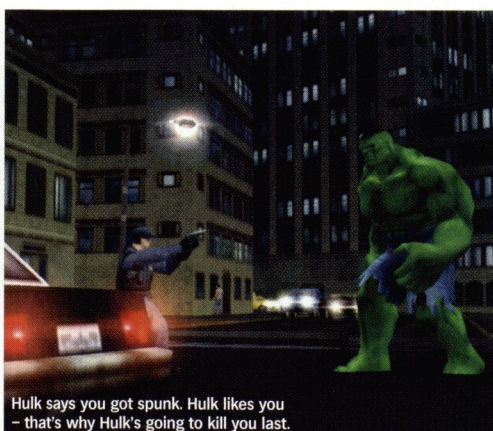
No CGI Hulk. They will have someone in a rubber suit.

Jennifer Connolly won't be in the sequel.

It will be released in 2006.



Hulk says tank's for coming!



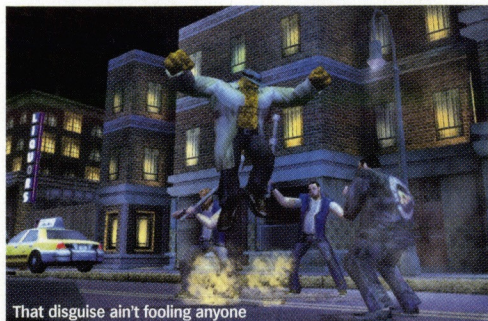
Hulk says you got spunk. Hulk likes you – that's why Hulk's going to kill you last.

OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	03	Great if it was a retro classic
SOUND	07	Solid voice work and decent effects
GAMEPLAY	08	Tight controls and tonnes of combos
LIFESPAN	07	Loads of unlockables to, um... unlock

A solid action game that's let down by painfully out-of-date visuals.

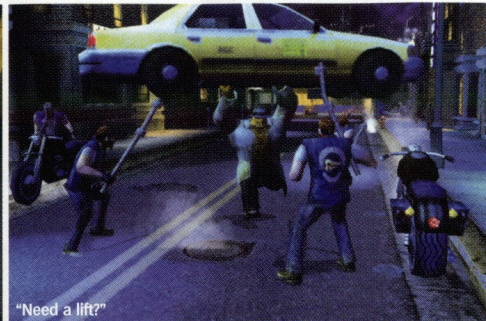
06



That disguise ain't fooling anyone



Definitely not enough Jessica Alba in this screen-shot



"Need a lift?"



"Bad news - you're fired!"



ACTION

FANTASTIC FOUR

Fantastic fun or frustrating flop?

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER: 7 STUDIOS ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ OUT: NOW ■ WEB: www.activision.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: NO ■ ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Haven't heard of 7 Studios? Neither had we until *Fantastic Four* landed in the office. The developer's only previous games include straight-to-bargain-bin classics like *Charlie's Angels*, *Angel X*, *Legion* and a pissweak update of the ancient arcade shooter, *Defender*.

Considering what a super job Activision did with both Spider-Man games, we were expecting big things from *Fantastic Four*. With four times as many super heroes fighting for space on screen, how could it be anything but fantastic? We're not sure if it's because of a rushed development schedule, the lackluster movie that inspired it or just the designers' lack of talent, but somewhere along the line almost all of the game's 'fantastic' potential has done an Invisible Woman-style disappearing act. It's not quite the disaster that Paul's Year 10 science experiment was, but it's a close second (in case you're wondering, he tried to create his dream date by scanning Hot Hunks photos into his computer, then hooking it up to the TV antenna and waiting for a lightning strike. You can still see him sitting eagerly at his computer on stormy nights).

The game has more than its fair share of weaknesses (and we'll deal them in a moment) but you can't fault *Fantastic Four*'s ideas. Rather than forcing you to choose one super hero and stick with them through the entire game, many scenes in the game see all four heroes fighting side-by-side and let you switch control between them on the fly. On top of this, there's the option to play through the entire game co-operatively (see 'Ganging Up' box).

It's undeniably cool to be able to smash a car over one punk's head as The Thing, flick control to The Human Torch and fire off a volley of fireballs, before turning transparent as The Invisible Woman, sneaking up behind

some stupid thug and giving him a makeshift lobotomy. The game is definitely at its best during these intense, multi-hero battle scenes.

As thrilling as these battles are, it's not too long before their repetitive nature and the game's laundry list of faults take their toll. For some reason that totally escapes us, getting through locked doors takes up a surprisingly large amount of game time. Locked doors? Of all the things we could be doing with super powers, we're unlocking doors?

Mr Fantastic can hack into computers to get through doors, The Thing can smash them open and The Torch can melt them. But you can only use these special skills when there's a glowing circle in front of a door. By stepping into the light you trigger a mini game where you get to press buttons in time to the on-screen prompts to melt, smash or hack the door. Yay...

In fact, any time you want to use your super powers for anything other than bashing bad guys, you have to walk into one of the glowing circles and make with the button pressing. Making a game with heroes who can smash through walls and turn metal into pools of magma, but then restricting these powers to scripted cut-scenes, is just criminal.

We might have been able to forgive the shallow combat and the linear action if the game was a graphical knockout. But instead of cramming the screen full of spectacular effects and hyper detailed textures, *FF* will scar your eyes with ugly first-generation graphics. Most of the PS2's five year-old launch titles looked better than this! **Narayan Pattison**

FUN FACT!

Stan Lee must have been having a bad day when he named the Fantastic Four. The Invisible Woman? C'mon, Stan. That's up there with Bananaman, Green Lantern and Ragman.

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Knight Rider

WORSE THAN

X-Men: Legends

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

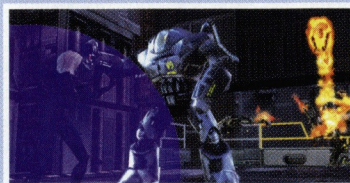
Co-op play and variety of super-powered moves

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Weak graphics and repetitive, linear levels

GANGING UP

Fantastic Four's strongest asset is its co-operative super hero action scenes. Teaming up with your mates while you take on an army of killer robots is fun for a while, but it can get old. During the first mission, Player 1 controls Ben Grimm as he nips around the exterior of a space station, pressing the action button on glowing circles to fix faulty devices. This mission is dull enough for Player 1 but it's even worse for Player 2, who controls a little maintenance robot that follows Ben around pointlessly for the entire level (except for the two seconds in which he gets to press the action button himself). Last time we checked, pressing © twice in an entire level does not qualify as gameplay.



OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	02	Ugly last generation visuals
SOUND	04	Okay effects, no surround sound
GAMEPLAY	05	Imaginative but poorly executed
LIFESPAN	07	Upgrades and unlockables aplenty

Enjoyable super hero brawls are let down by repetitive and restrictive design.

05



IN THIS ISSUE:
We pay a visit to
HELLGATE: LONDON;
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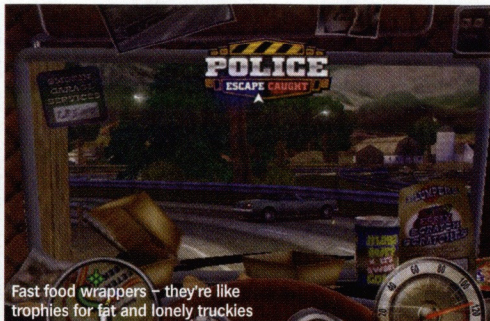
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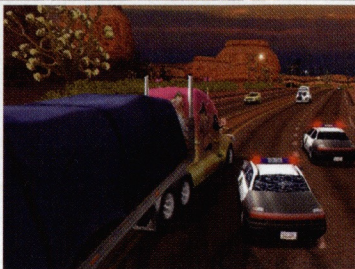
The only kind of airbags you want to be face-down in



Fast food wrappers – they're like trophies for fat and lonely truckies



"I'd like two jugs please. No, nothing to drink"



DRIVING

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS 2

Anyone interested in a cheap truck?

DISTRIBUTOR: RED ANT ■ DEVELOPER: EUTECHNYX ■ PRICE: \$49.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: NOW ■ WEB: www.bigmuthatruckers.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: NO ■ ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Eutechnyx is the king of bargain titles. In its PSone days it spat out 007 Racing, F1 World Grand Prix 2000 and Test Drive: Le Mans. However it was on the PS2 where its success began. Big Mutha Truckers went on to sell over a million copies, which is better than a lot of full-price games do. Now it's sticking with the 'keep on trucking' nature and delivering Big Mutha Truckers 2: Truck Me Harder.

We were just as surprised as anyone to discover there was going to be a sequel to *Big Mutha Truckers*. Not every budget game sells a million copies and scores itself a sequel. Although, not many budget games are smart enough to feature hot chicks in revealing outfits.

Big Mutha Truckers 2: Truck Me Harder keeps the same crude humour and risqué characters as the original and for the most part it's absolutely hilarious. *BMT2* introduces various radio stations with piss-taking commercials and witty DJ banter, similar to what you'd find in any of the GTA games. There's certainly no shortage of belly laughs.

Unfortunately the rest of the game is no laughing matter. Our major problem with *BMT2* is that the big rigs, and other vehicles you get behind the wheel of, don't handle as well as you'd hope. Sharp turns are especially frustrating with the trucks as it's almost like you have to do a three-point turn just to make it around a corner. This wouldn't be as annoying if you didn't have a time limit on missions and cops ramming into you and damaging your wheels.

The missions can also get a little boring. The story for *BMT2* is that Ma Jackson, the proprietor of 'Big Mutha Truckers Haulage', has been arrested for tax evasion. Now it's up to you to bribe the 12 jurors into giving a 'not guilty' verdict. Earning the cash to do this is done by making truck deliveries – not exactly

the most exciting way to earn money.

Changing the juror's mind doesn't come cheap either. The first juror, Slits, wants \$100,000. Now we're not mathematicians, but considering you earn about \$20-30,000 per delivery, and there are 12 jurors, who each want more money the further down the list you go, you're going to need a stockpile of No Doze pills to suffer through this long haul.

Fortunately *BMT2* isn't too linear, otherwise we're certain you would be slipping into microsleeps. There are several routes you can take and there are always obstacles getting in your way – suicidal cops, unavoidable natural disasters and even creatures from outer space. One obstacle sees you trying to avoid a UFO's tractor beam in a limited time – so it's not like you're constantly sitting on the highway listening to Hick FM without anything interesting happening. The problem is that this is all you're going to be doing to raise the cash to pay off the jurors, and it gets old fast.

If you keep reminding yourself while playing *Big Mutha Truckers 2: Truck Me Harder* that it only set you back \$49.95, then you'll likely forgive its faults. While it's more exciting than actually being a real-life truck driver, *Big Mutha Truckers 2* seems to be all about having a laugh and nothing more. So if that's all you're after then get trucking, otherwise save your cash for something that's fun to play, as well as funny to listen to. **Paul Frew**

JACKPOT!

There are other ways to earn cash in *BMT2* that don't involve hitting the road. You can hit the pubs and win some cash through gambling, but not through poker, blackjack or roulette. No you'll be playing a man's game. Snap. For those not familiar with the rules, two players put down cards and when two match one has to snap the cards to win. It's easy money.



LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Big Mutha Truckers

WORSE THAN

The Simpsons: Hit and Run

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

Humour- The game is as funny as the ads in *GTA: San Andreas*

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

The driving, the graphics and the missions are all 'budget quality'

OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	05	Uses the SRS engine. Say no more
SOUND	09	Plenty of hilarious one-liners
GAMEPLAY	03	Drives like a broken trolley
LIFESPAN	08	Plenty to do, almost too much

For a little extra cash, and even a little less, you can find better street machines.

05

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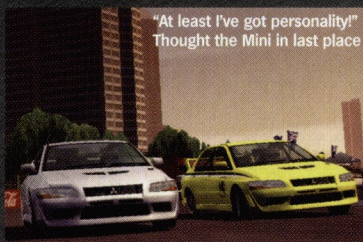
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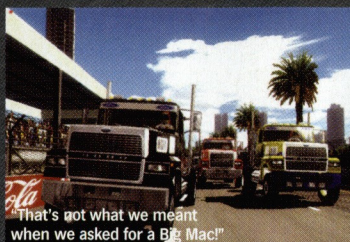
THE PLATINUM CLUB

Where the best PS2 games are born again

Platinum games are like the Mars Bars of the gaming world. They're sweet, full of goodness and very cheap. So cheap that you can now pick up a selection of Platinum games for a crazy \$29.95. That's right, \$29.95. To celebrate this drop in price, we will now be featuring a section of the platinum games you must own... or else.



"At least I've got personality!"
Thought the Mini in last place



"That's not what we meant
when we asked for a Big Mac!"



RACING



V8 SUPERCARS 2

Gentleman, start your engines

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ WEB: www.codemasters.com/v8supercars2 ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: YES ■ ONLINE: YES

With a name like *V8 Supercars*, you'd be crazy not to think that the game isn't chock-full of Holdens, Fords and other V8 monsters. However, assuming that's all the cars you'll see is like assuming Shane Warne won't cheat on his wife again. Not only will you get to race all of the official Holden and Ford cars, but you'll also get to take another 30 beasts out for a spin, including the Mitsubishi 3000 GT, Subaru Impreza WRX and even a big rig, *Mutha Trucker*-style. While it's not even close to the total found in *GT4*, you're definitely getting the very best of the best racing cars here.

You'll get to test drive most of these beasts in the season mode, where you star as an up-and-coming racer clawing up the ranks to try and make the big time. However, if you want everything available straight away you can also compete online or split-screen against other rev-heads in the simulation mode.

The driving physics are some of the best we've seen in any racing game on the market and the constant changing of driving styles to suit the different vehicles allows you to drive all night long without fatigue. *V8 Supercars 2* is a fine racer and worthy of a podium finish.

OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	09	The V8s have never looked so good
SOUND	06	Some cars sound like they need a service
GAMEPLAY	10	Every vehicle reacts like it should
LIFESPAN	08	Changing the difficulty levels will keep you busy

A turbo-charged must-have for both fans of V8 events and racing sims alike.

09

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER



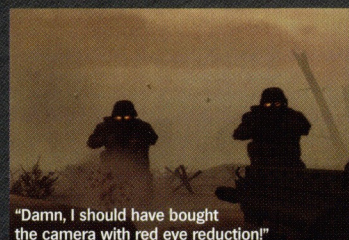
KILLZONE

We get in the zone – is it really 'all that'?

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: GUERILLA GAMES ■ PLAYERS: 1-16 ■ WEB: www.killzoneps2.com

The battles of *Killzone* are fought in and around the main colony of Vehta City. Some of the environments are really well done, like the trenches and the mangrove swamps, and create an absorbing, intimidating atmosphere.

Killzone is a gritty venture into bloody close-quarters combat with varied single-player gameplay and a thoroughly enjoyable online aspect. With the sequel in the works for the PS3, there's no better reason to pick this up now and get a taste of the *Killzone* universe.



"Damn, I should have bought the camera with red eye reduction!"

Not the be-all and end-all we were hoping for, but not bad either.

07

PLATFORM



JAK 3

Thought you'd seen it all? You don't know Jak!

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: NAUGHTY DOG ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ WEB: www.naughtydog.com

It's been a year since Jak and Dexter defeated Baron Praxis, Krew and Kor. By all rights Jak should be soaking it up in a hot tub with Ashelin or Kiera. Or both. But fate has a funny way of ruining the party and things have never been worse. Count Veger and the council decide to banish Jak to the Wastelands, far beyond the walls of the city.

Sometimes cheeky and sometimes brooding, *Jak 3* is never lacking in fun. Put it straight to the top of the Platinum list because you won't find a better platforming game around.



"Watch out for the guns, they'll getcha!"

More evolutionary than revolutionary, but Jak 3 is still stunning.

09

ACTION

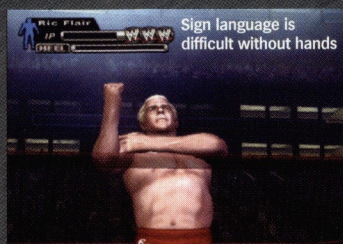


WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW

The five-time champion puts it all on the line...

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: YUKES ■ PLAYERS: 1-12 ■ WEB: www.smackdown-vs-raw-game.com

Much like any yearly revision, the new features may seem like minor tweaks on the outset, but once you boot up the older game the difference becomes as clear as night and day. When you stack up the visual upgrade, improvements in gameplay, WWE voice talent, a professionally scripted career mode online play, and add the same solid foundation and versatile match options we've come to expect, there's no contest. For grappling fans this is a no-brainer.



The level of greatness that other grapplers can only aspire to.

09

ACTION

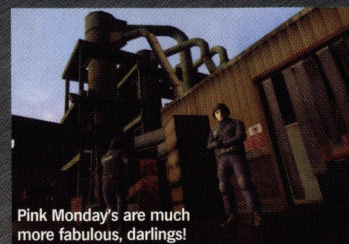


THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

Does it have what it takes to steal you away?

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: LONDON STUDIO ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ WEB: www.thegetaway2.co.uk

It really is a shame that *The Getaway: Black Monday* doesn't gel together better. The recreation of London is amazingly authentic, the action is gritty and fairly intense, and the cut-scenes raise the bar to cinematic new heights. Unfortunately, while *Black Monday's* driving and shooting missions are quite good, that's all it has on offer. Everything *Black Monday* does, *San Andreas* does better, and then takes it so much further. Play this one after you've completed *GTA3*, *Vice City* and *San Andreas*.



Pink Monday's are much more fabulous, darlings!

Solid fun - if only it lived in a world without Grand Theft Auto.

07

ACTION



RATCHET AND CLANK 3: UP YOUR ARSENAL

More hilarious than Donald Trump's hairstyle

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: INSOMNIAC GAMES ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ WEB: www.insomniacgames.com

Ratchet and Clank 3 features a greater variety of action than you'd find on most entire shelves at a games store. And what's more, it makes it look easy, leaving you to wonder why so many other action games have dropped the ball. The single-player game smashes the needle on the 'Fun-O-Meter' firmly into orgasmic territory and yet Insomniac still found time to make a multiplayer mode that puts most first-person shooter titles to shame. Yep, your must-have Platinum list just got a little longer.



"I'm going to Ratchet your nuts off!"

In a perfect world all platform games would be this much fun.

09

SPORTS

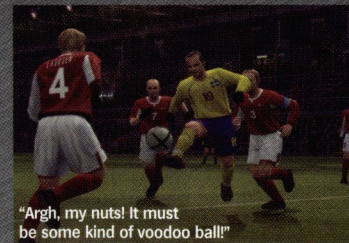


PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

Yes, it's still the best boot-'em-up around...

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: KONAMI ■ PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ WEB: www.konami.com

We could harp on about the brilliant idiosyncrasies of this game for 20 pages, but we'd rather get back to playing another match. If you enjoy sports games at all, particularly all night long bouts of multiplayer shenanigans, this should be the very next game you buy. *Pro Evolution Soccer 4* is the most recent edition in the long running footy franchise that's been keeping the *FIFA* series in the number two spot for as long as we can remember - get it!



"Argh, my nuts! It must be some kind of voodoo ball!"

It's very simple. If you like soccer, you MUST buy this game.

09

BARGAINS OF THE MONTH

Burnout 3

Was: \$99.95 Now: \$24.94
Available: JB HI-FI



It's eye-meltingly spunky and so fast you won't be able to blink. Stop looking for an arcade racer that's more fun than *Burnout 3* - you won't find one **10/10**

Juiced

Was: \$99.95 Now: \$82
Available: JB HI-FI



It can't match *Midnight Club 3* for thrills, but it boasts a far more impressive stables for than *NFSU2*. No revolution, but a solid racer for hardcore rev-heads **8/10**

Transformers

Was: \$79.95 Now: \$39
Available: JB HI-FI



Intense battles, giant bosses, sweet graphics and over-the-top action! A superb fix for the shooter addicts and nostalgiac fans of the cartoon series **8/10**

Fantastic 4

Was: \$79.95 Now: 6784
Available: Dick Smith Electronics



Enjoyable super hero brawls are let down by repetitive and restrictive design and painfully dated graphics. Only recommended for serious fans. **5/10**

God of War

Was: \$99.95 Now: \$78.43
Available: Dick Smith Electronics



God of War combines bloody action, puzzle-solving and cliff jumping in a brilliantly realised, beautiful-looking epic that rocks HARD on every level **9/10**

SingStar Pop bundle

Was: \$99.95 Now: \$79
Available: JB HI-FI, Dick Smith Electronics



Another solid *SingStar* title at a bargain price. If Sony keeps 'em coming, will keep testing the patience of the neighbourhood dogs with our vocals. **9/10**

Tekken 5

Was: \$99.95 Now: \$79
Available: JB HI-FI



Tekken 5 is a major improvement over *Tekken 4* and is a must own fighter for anyone with a PS2 and a lust for brutal hand to hand combat **9/10**

EA bargains

Was: \$49.95 Now: \$29.95
Available: Everywhere
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004, *The Sims Bustin' Out*, *SSX 3*, *Need for Speed Underground*, *Medal of Honor: Frontline*, *The Lord of The Rings: The Two Towers*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *FIFA Soccer 2004*.

JUST FOR KIDS

KITTY LITTER

Sickeningly cute cartoon cat Hello Kitty originated in Japan in the early seventies and has appeared on approximately three billion lunchboxes and backpacks worldwide ever since. *Hello Kitty Roller Rescue* is the first time the frolicking feline and her penguin pal Bad Badtz Maru have appeared on the PS2, and gamers will finally be able to step into their itty bitty shoes and go on an exciting adventure through Sanrio Town. Did we say shoes? Because we meant hot pink roller skates.

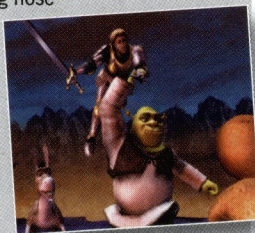
Honestly, could these guys get any more adorable? What? We're not all about guns and racing cars, you know.



SHREK BACK ON DECK

One of the funniest scenes in the original Shrek movie was when the big green ogre took on all the knights in a WWE-style wrestling bout. So it's good news that Activision has made a videogame out of it (sort of) with the upcoming *Shrek's SuperSlam*. All of the popular Shrek characters will get stuck into no-holds-barred brawls in a number of arenas including the Poison Apple Inn and Dragon's Gate. Signature moves such as Shrek's room-clearing gas attack and Pinocchio's extending nose

of death, combined with fully destructible environments, should make the combat pleasantly unique. And who doesn't want to beat the snot out of that little weasel, Lord Farquard?

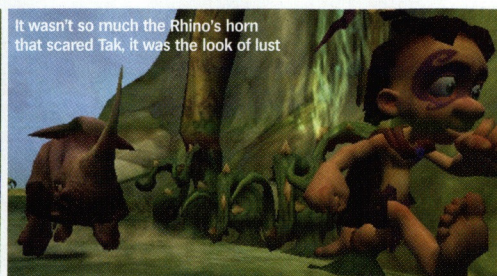


TY ME KANGAROO DOWN

Aussie developer Krome Studios is back at work on the *Ty the Tasmanian Tiger* franchise, readying the third instalment in the popular platform series, dubbed *Night of the Quinkan*. *Ty 3* will feature a host of improvements including larger and more detailed environments and a completely revamped weapons system. New vehicles include the Crabmersible, which is a giant mechanised crab complete with a pair of jumbo pincers. There's also talk of a co-op mode – two player *Ty the Tasmanian Tiger*? That's tops!



✕ PLATFORMER



It wasn't so much the Rhino's horn that scared Tak, it was the look of lust

TAK: THE GREAT JUJU CHALLENGE

Tak is back on a brand new track

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: AVALANCHE SOFTWARE ■ RELEASE DATE: SPRING 2005

The original *Tak and the Power of Juju* was an enjoyable platform romp packed with a variety of puzzles and mysterious voodoo powers. The second game, *Tak: Staff of Dreams*, was also a lot of fun without really offering any new enhancements to the gameplay featured in the original.

Not so for the third game, *Tak: The Great Juju Challenge*, which is picking up the series like a platform-stuffed snow globe and giving it a damned good shake. Rather than tread the familiar adventure game path, the third *Tak* game is based around a series of timed stages brimming with puzzles, obstacles and enemies.

Each stage plays like a race, where Tak and his fellow tribesman Lok compete against a number of challengers. Think of it as a *Tak* game crossed with

that old television game show *Gladiators* (or even *It's a Knock-Out*, if you're old enough to remember).

Most of the puzzles play out like you'd expect in a game of this type, with the one difference being that you'll have to swap between Tak and Lok in order to solve them (or get a buddy to pick up a second controller and join in). Tak has a bunch of magic powers to get the job done, while Lok relies on sheer strength (and a giant hammer) to bust through enemies and other barriers in his path.

There are also animals to ride, cannons to mount and an awesome dodgem car destruction derby that occurs at the end of each level. By the looks of things, *Tak* may once again cast an enchanting spell on younger gamers. ➤ TO



✕ PARTY



Spongy fingers made barre chords impossible

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: LIGHTS, CAMERA, PANTS!

Have a party in your Bikini Bottom

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: STUDIO OZ ■ RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

A couple of months ago we brought you the first news on the cooperative-based *SpongeBob SquarePants: Unite*, now we're wringing out fresh juice from the proverbial information-sponge with a first look at the action-packed and brilliantly titled *SpongeBob SquarePants: Lights, Camera, PANTS!*

Unlike previous games featuring the pineapple-under-the-sea-dweller, *Lights, Camera, PANTS!* will be based entirely around mini-games for up to four players, ala *Shrek Super Party* or *Muppets Party Cruise*. More than 30 gametypes will be included, and you'll be able to choose your character from a list of episode regulars, including Patrick, Squidworth, Sandy, Plankton, Mr Krabs and of course, the buck-

toothed squarepants-wearer himself.

We've only seen a handful of the mini-games on offer, but the one that stands out the most so far is 'Goo-ladiators'. In it, players must step into a circular arena surrounded by a sticky pool of sludge. The object of the game is to fire goo at your opponents in order to knock them into the sludge, while also avoiding the bumper in the middle of the platform that is likely to send you flying. The last man standing it the winner.

SpongeBob SquarePants: Lights, Camera, PANTS! should provide a fun collection of instantly gratifying games for gatherings of younger gamers. Even if you're too old for Saturday morning cartoons – but you watch them anyway – it will still be great for a laugh ➤ TO

TURTLE POWER PRIZES



If they made action figures out of the OPS2 team, we'd want them to have fully poseable thumbs – how else would they be able to grip a PS2 controller? But failing that, we'd want them to be capable of some stylish Ninja moves – just like these new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Combat Warrior action figures.

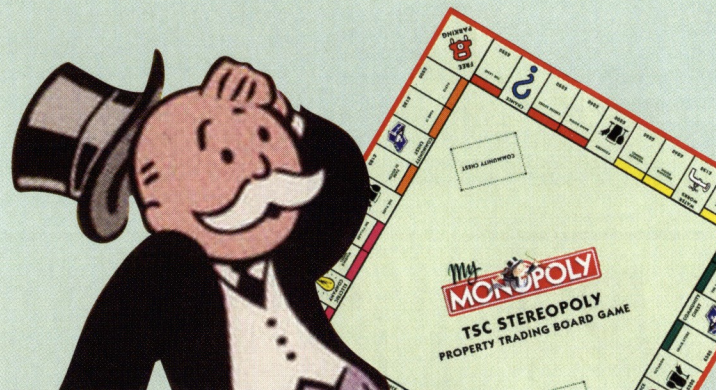
Each Combat Warrior figure comes with his own unique combat weapons

to display his special Ninja move! An included weapons rack allows each figure to pick and choose multiple fighting strategies, and each figure also comes with golden medallion and exclusive trading card displaying each figures' unique warrior manoeuvre. Thanks to our friends at Funtastic Toys, we've got 12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Combat Warrior figures to give away! Cowabunga!

HOW TO ENTER – Just tell us in 25 words or less what special ability you would have if you were an action figure. Send your entry to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with "Turtles giveaway – September" in the subject line. Refer to competition entry conditions on page 12 for more details.

USELESS FACTS

- A group of twelve or more cows is called a flink
- An apple, onion, and potato all have the same taste. The differences in flavour are caused by their smell.
- The only insect that can turn its head 360 degrees is the praying mantis.
- Of the 206 bones in the average human adult's body, 106 are in the hands and feet.
- Pentheraphobia is the term for the fear of a mother-in-law (we're long term sufferers).
- Every year about 98% of atoms in your body are replaced.
- The stomach acids in a snake's stomach can digest bones and teeth but not fur or hair.
- Bamboo can grow up to three feet in a 24 hour period.
- Around 60 circus performers have been shot from cannons. At last report, more than half of them have been killed.
- The record for the longest Monopoly game ever played was 1,680 hours long – that's 70 straight days!



Lindsay Lohan's dieting was clearly out of control



"Argh – I should have eaten after hula-hooping"



✗ ACTION-ADVENTURE

THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS: OOGIE'S REVENGE

Could be worth the sleepless nights...

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1 ■ **DISTRIBUTOR:** THQ ■ **DEVELOPER:** CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE DATE:** SEPTEMBER

The *Nightmare Before Christmas* might well be the best movie Tim Burton has ever made, aside of course from *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* (check your local video store for that nugget of gold). It's a unique tale that melds together the contrasting traditions of two holidays, Halloween and Christmas, and realises it all in a distinctive claymation visual style – with a pretty dark edge.

Oogie's Revenge is a third-person action game that sees you take on the role of the story's hero,

Jack Skellington, in an attempt to thwart the antics of the mischievous Oogie Boogie.

Jack's not just armed with good intentions, though – he also has a soul-stealing whip that he can beat enemies senseless with. But that's just for starters, if Jack gets in a real bind he can transform into either The Pumpkin King or Santa Jack. The former allows you to blast enemies with blistering fire attacks, while the latter appropriately drops Christmas presents packed with deadly Jack-in-the-Box surprises.

From what we've seen so far the style of the game seems to be very much in line with the film, with Jack taking morbid situations and naively trying to turn them into carefree musicals.

All the main characters such as Sally, Zero and the bathtub-bound Lock, Shock and Barrel also make their first PS2 appearance since they each played roles in Disney and Square's RPG, *Kingdom Hearts*. We'll let you know if it's a nasty trick or a PS2 treat when we've got the finished game in our hands next month. **▶ TO**

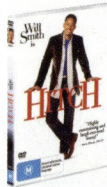
CHARACTER PROFILE

NAME: Jack Skellington
OCCUPATION: Pumpkin King of Halloween Town
BACKSTORY: Jack got bored of tricking and treating and decided to explore the delights of Christmas Town in the movie, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* [1993].
QUOTE: "Just because I cannot see it, doesn't mean I can't believe it!"
DID YOU KNOW: Jack made his first movie appearance in *Beetlejuice* (1988), on top of Beetlejuice's carousel hat towards the end of the film.



HITCH

Director: Andy Tennant **Writer:** Kevin Bisch **Starring:** Will Smith, Eva Mendes, Kevin James, Amber Valletta **Rating:** M



FILM: You wouldn't normally sit back on the couch with your girlfriend to watch a Will Smith flick. This is because it's usually all about blowing stuff up, blackalicious comedy and the use of the F-word more often than Naz when he's playing *Soul Calibur II*. But surprisingly, *Hitch* is different. Alex 'Hitch' Hitchens is a date doctor. He helps those unfortunate souls who can't get lucky become the masters of the no-pants dance.

SCORE A DATE WITH HITCH

To score one of three copies of *Hitch* on DVD, simply answer this question:

What movie did Will Smith appear in that starred Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson?

Mark entries as "Hitch giveaway". See page 12 for entry details.

Business picks up when a reporter becomes interested in one of Hitch's clients girlfriends. This then leads to Hitch and the reporter dating and getting involved in those traditional romantic comedy situations. Thankfully it's still funny as hell. Kevin James (*King of Queens*) steals the show but Smith himself holds up with a charming comedic style we haven't seen before. By the end *Hitch* does what any romantic comedy is supposed to: it makes you feel good... and it helps you score. **8/10**

Extras: The usual bloopers and deleted scenes, but the best feature is the 'Dance Steps Made Easy' featurette. Now you'll be able to dance like Usher, instead of Vanilla Ice. **7/10**

Verdict: A light movie that anyone can enjoy even if you're not a fan of the *Fresh Prince*. **PF**



"And then Paul stood in front of me like this and said, I'm ready"

THE RING TWO

Director: Hideo Nakata **Writer:** Koji Suzuki **Starring:** Naomi Watts, Simon Baker, David Dorfman, Elizabeth Perkins **Rating:** M



FILM: We know. You thought everything was wrapped up at the end of *The Ring*, but you were wrong. Samara is back and Rachel (Watts) has to take her down for good. The good news is you will sleep well after watching this because it's not half as scary as the first film. Instead of creeping you out like the original did, *The Ring Two* goes for the cheap scares, where something jumps out at you from nowhere. Overall it suffers the sequel curse in that it just doesn't match the impact of the original. **6/10**

Extras: Making of, deleted scenes and alternate scenes. As for featurettes you can find out about the link between *The Ring* and *The Ring Two*, plus the story behind the creation of the devilish Samara. **8/10**

Verdict: Still scary but just not as scary, or as enjoyable to watch, as the original. **PF**



ONG BAK

Director: Pracha Pinkaew **Writer:** Pracha Pinkaew, Panna Rittikrai **Starring:** Tony Jaa, Petchtai Wongkamlao, Pumwaree Yodkamol, Suchao Pongwilai **Rating:** MA15+



FILM: Martial arts films don't really have the same punch these days – not like the old Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee films did. *Ong Bak* tries to change that and does a damn fine job, thanks to the talents of martial arts' next big thing, Tony Jaa. The action in *Ong Bak* will blow you out of your seat. Some of the stunts are insane, and when you consider they were performed without

any wires or CGI, you'll really be amazed by what you've seen. The only problem is the plot, but who watches a kung-fu movie for the story? **8/10**

Extras: Several Thai boxing documentaries, interviews with the stars, behind the scenes movies that show how each stunt was done and so much more. **10/10**

Verdict: Even though the story is weak, there's more than enough action and stunts – which is really the whole point of the martial arts genre. **PF**



CARMEN ELEKTRA'S NWWL

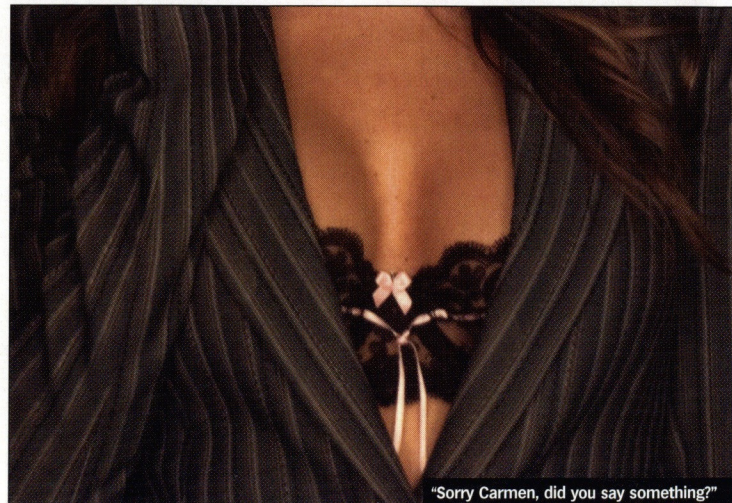
Director: N/A **Writer:** N/A **Starring:** Carmen Elektra, Jimmy Hart **Rating:** MA15+



FILM: Sure the WWE is cool, but when you've got naked chicks rolling around in the ring, giving each other nipple cripples and just being, er, naked then you tend to forget about the WWE and get as hard as The Rock. While most of the wrestlers seem to hail from one of our favourite holiday spots, Silicon Valley, the NWWL does come off looking pretty average compared to the professionals. It's fine for a laugh when your mates come around but it's not a serious contender for the big league. **6/10**

Extras: No extras but what did you expect? Deleted boobie scenes? There's plenty of them in the feature. **0/10**

Verdict: Like the WWE, NWWL is a great laugh but nothing more. Also – Carmen Elektra's the hottest chick in it, and the only one that remains clothed. Pity. **PF**



"Sorry Carmen, did you say something?"

XA 2021

Manufacturer: Altec-Lansing Available: Now Price: \$99.95

If you've get better sound quality coming through your headphones than your television, then it sounds like you need some new speakers. Surround sound can rid your bank account of a lot of dough, but if you're after something cheaper that still does a good job then there's always the XA 2021.

The set comes with two 3-inch satellite drivers and a 5.25-inch long-throw woofer. If that means about as much to you as Phill's shoe size, basically it ensures that you will not only hear but feel every single gunshot, screeching tyre, rewinding V8 and yell from a punk across the road in *San Andreas* in perfect clarity.

You don't just have to use it on your PS2 either – the XA 2021 can also plug into your PC, DVD player, MP3 player and TV. The satellites are shielded so you can use them near your monitor without fear of it dying, and the speakers are also wall mountable – like Naz after two drinks. The XA 2021 provides booming bangs for your bucks, and it's the perfect solution if you don't have enough cash to fork out for a complete surround sound package. **PF 8/10**



AV CONTROL CENTER 2

Manufacturer: Joytech Available: August Price: \$169.95

Tired of having to unplug your VCR, DVD player or digital set-top box every time you want to hook your PS2 up? Messing around with cables every time you want to switch devices will be nothing more than an unpleasant memory thanks to Joytech's AV Control Center 2. With six AV inputs you can plug absolutely everything you own into the box, and then at the touch of a button you can flick between them. The AV Control Center 2 even has its own remote, for the ultimate in couch jockey control. Each one of the six inputs has room for standard AV cables, S-Video,

Component and Optical Audio cables, which can then be sent to your TV and hi-fi as you select them. For anyone who wants a quick AV refresher course, the regular PS2 AV cables (yellow, white and red) will give you decent picture quality. The standard AV cables will also give you surround sound capability but not with the same clarity as an Optical Audio cable. By upgrading the yellow video cable to an S-Video cable you will improve the picture quality. Most noticeably, S-Video will sharpen the image and remove the dotty/shimmering effect on harsh lines of

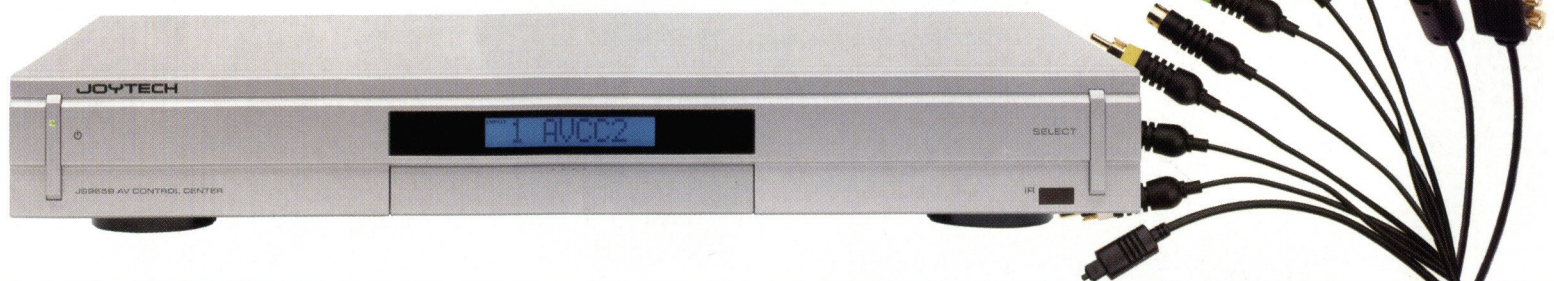
colour. Component video cables (red, green and blue) will give you perfect picture quality (with no colour bleed at all) and will enable progressive scan in games that are programmed for it (like *Soul Calibur II*, *Ghosthunter*, *Tekken 5* and *Jak 3*). Due to the huge range of AV options available in the Joytech box, the AV Control Center 2 isn't the cheapest AV box around but it's by far and away the most extensive. So long as you've got enough hi-fi and TV tech to support it, the AV Control Center 2 is an essential AV asset for your home entertainment system. **NP 8/10**

DIGITAL AV CABLE

Manufacturer: Joytech Available: Now Price: \$34.95

Assuming your TV isn't older than you are, the Joytech PS2 Digital AV Cable will be the answer to all your audio visual needs. It comes with AV, S-Video and component video cables and both optical and analogue audio cables. No matter how hi-tech your setup is, this cable will have you covered.

NP 9/10



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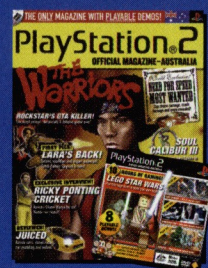
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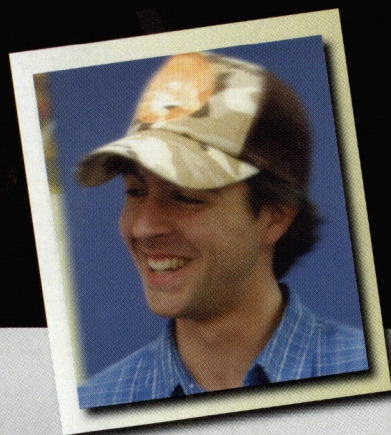
OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR FOR LESS!



Re-boot

PART TWO

LEGO Star Wars



EPISODE II: ATTACK OF THE CLONES

CHAPTER 1 - DISCOVERY ON KAMINO

Fix the machinery and the walkway then switch to R2 to float across to the other side. Grab the canister and float back to the main landing. Grab the studs before moving the gears to make to the platform rise.

When the platform rises use Jar Jar to grab the canister.

Clear the area then head down the hallway collecting studs. Follow the hallway left and have the droid open the door. Use the Force to empty the bucket and shake the mop.

Go around the circular hallway and go to the next room and turn on all the lights. Go through the next door and use the Force on all the red lights. Continue doing this until a piece of machinery rises. Activate it then go through the door. Continue using the Force on the lights and the explosive canisters. Go down the corridor where the Kaminoan isn't and activate more lights and collect the goods.

Unlock the door with C-3PO and collect the goods. Jump to the small platform and step on the red switch. Get to the next platform and jump on the next switch. When you reach the top, use the Force on the latches and then jump on the elevator. Grab the canister then jump on the black LEGO until you can jump up and grab the blue stud. Go back to the circular platform and stop on the middle one. Have Anakin (boy) jump into the chute and collect the studs and another canister.

Go back and follow Kaminoan. Collect the studs and use the Force on the dials. Grab the canister then use R4 to unlock the

door. Go in the opposite direction of the Kaminoan and collect the studs near the window then go back and follow him. Smash the droids then use the Force on all the items in the room including the explosive canister. Open the next door and avoid the missile. Grab the studs and use the Force four times on the vending machine. Collect the pieces and use them on the picture. Grab another canister and follow the Fetts. Deflect the blasts until the shield is down and go into the room in the left wall. Use the Force on everything in the room for studs. Have R4 disable the lock so you can grab the blue stud. Step on the all the switches in the room. Wait for the party to start and grab the canister. Go back to the room you saw Jango go in. Collect any studs then do the switch game again for another canister. Go out the next exit and have R4 float out over the sea. When you get to the platform collect all the studs. Go back and switch to Obi-Wan. Head toward the explosives and when they start to shake run away. Continue chasing Jango down the walkway. When he turns off, don't follow him. Go to the end of the walkway for more studs.

Grapple with Amidala to the walkway and have C-3PO open the lock. Jump on the elevator and have Panaka shoot the three targets. Jump on the walkway and collect the studs. Go back to where you started to find a canister nearby and some more studs on the other side.

Choose Jango again and step on the red switch. Have your droid fly you out to the other side and step on the next switch. Use the Force to move some objects and unlock the door. Take the elevator to the top and move the objects

This month we've shoehorned in part two of our *LEGO Star Wars* guide. At one point Paul had to glue his eyes open just so he wouldn't fall asleep before he collected every last LEGO stud. Now that's dedication! Don't forget, the sections in italics can only be completed in Freeplay mode – which you'll need to do if you want to unlock the *Episode IV: A New Hope* bonus level. And seriously, who wouldn't want to do that?

JAMES ELLIS
Tips Editor

behind you for studs. Kill the droids and use the panels at the end of the hall. Move the LEGO pieces and use the panel behind it.

Open the door on the left with Darth Vader and use the Force on all the switches to grab the canister.

Go to the door at the end and deflect the blaster shots. Have R4 go to the back of the platform to access the control panel. When Jango switches to the rockets, use the Force to stop them and send them back at him. When he's had enough chase him down and strike him.

CHAPTER 2 - DROID FACTORY

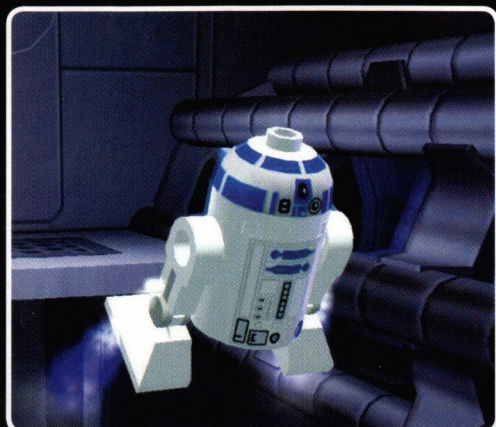
Run in the opposite direction to find studs and a canister. Head back and use the Force on all the lights. Have Padme kill the enemies then follow the tunnel collecting loot. Go through the door and jump on the platform to the left to grab the studs.

Use Anakin (boy) to slide up the chute on the above platform to grab a canister.

Get on the conveyor belt and head right. Use the pipes to jump to the top to find droids and studs. Drop down to the conveyor belt and jump through the yellow partition to kill a creature and get your lightsaber. Get back on the conveyor belt and follow it to another yellow partition. Jump through and slice up the droid. Move around the container and Force the fans to work. Use the first fan to get a blue stud and the second to get to the next section. Move the gear and then the walkway so Padme can grapple to the next section and shoot the target on the wall. Have R2 open the door and head in. Use him again to activate the coloured buttons to get another canister.

Have Jar Jar jump up to grab the blue stud here.

Head outside and have Padme grapple to the ledge near the fans. Ride it to the top and head inside. Shoot the equipment to activate the pot and jump in it. Jump to the opposite platform for some studs and a spot to grapple from. Go to the next level and shoot more equipment. Repeat the pot rides until you find a switch that Anakin can use the Force on to activate more pots. When you reach the top platform defeat the enemies and run past the door to grab a canister. Then go back and have R2 open the door. Make your way across



and grab the canister at the end. Get out of there and head right. Grab the studs and get to the next grappling area. Smash the equipment and have R2 unlock the door. In the next room, use the Force on the axis to move the platform. Move to the platform and have C-3PO open the door. Regroup and switch to Padme. Collect any studs and grapple to the walkway for a canister. Grapple again to the hover walkway. Then get R2 to hover to the platform under the area you just got the canister. Then hover to C-3PO and head out the door. In the cave, go left to get a blue stud. Switch to Padme and shoot any enemies then have Anakin grab the studs.

Use Jar Jar to jump into the holes to grab a canister.

Smash the LEGO fence and run in the hole. Have R2 activate the switch then go down the path to find a canister. Go back and use the Force on the broken door to make two ledges. Go to the narrow piece of land and have R2 float across to get some goods. Head under the archway and outside. Underneath the rock pillar is a blue stud. On the other side of the archway is another blue stud. Float from the second step with R2 to get to the next island. Collect the items then float back. Grapple to the ledge above and shoot the object on the edge. Go back to Anakin and head right. Use the LEGO bricks to make a ledge then have R2 hover you to safety. Continue along killing anything in your way. When you get to a dead end have C-3PO open the door. Around the rock pillar is another canister so grab it before going through the door. Collect the studs and have R2 access the panels in the back. Move the junk and take the elevator up.

When the elevator is as high as possible have Jar Jar jump and grab a canister.

Move the equipment over the shield blocking your path. Destroy all the equipment for the shield to go down. Blast all the enemies that come in. Before saving Obi-Wan collect all the studs and then use the Force to explode the four pods holding him to free him.

CHAPTER 3 - JEDI BATTLE

Block the shots and kill the droids. In the arena head left and grab the canister behind the pillar.

Use Jar Jar to get to the ledge on the left for a canister. Head right and double jump to the next ledge for another one.

Free Padme and collect all the studs around. Then follow the arena wall to the right to get another canister. Head for Anakin's cage and defeat the droids. After the battle, switch to Padme and grapple to the ledge above. Collect the stud and the canister and then grapple to an even higher ledge for another canister. Go back and jump on the cage holding Anakin for a blue stud. Free Anakin and follow the wall to the left. Use the Force to pull the switch and grab the canister inside the cage. Follow the wall to the right killing anything in your path. Free Obi-Wan and use the LEGO to make an elevator. Collect the studs and then grapple to the top ledge. Shoot the target and jump on the elevator. Get off at the second and third ledge for canisters and on the top ledge will be a blue stud.

Use the Force to create a box. Have Anakin (boy) jump on it so he can get in the chute and collect the canister.

Free Obi-Wan and fix the tower up ahead. Organise the blocks so it's stacked brown, white, brown, white. Collect the canister at the



Re-boot

top then jump back in to battle. Deflect all fire and when Jango Fett shows just stay close to the arena wall as possible. Deflecting shots should be your only attack. Use the Force when he starts shooting rockets at you.

CHAPTER 4 - GUNSHIP CAVALRY

The canisters are all in containers which you have to shoot to free. The first canister is at the left wall. Move right and follow the trail for the second one. After the split road get ready to shoot and grab another one. Shoot the generators to get past the red wall. When the trail splits again, stay near the bottom for another canister. After the rock formation swing right for the next canister. When the paths meet again shoot two more generators to knock out the barrier. Go left of the dome and grab a canister. Shoot the generators next to the guns when the shields are down. Circle the dome for four more canisters.

CHAPTER 5 - COUNT DOOKU

Head left with R2 and hover to the edge to grab the canister.

Before chasing Dooku, Grapple with Amidala to the ledge for a canister.

Defeat the droids and move the rubble at the back of the tunnel. Slice the wall and grab the canister inside. Step on the switch and jump on to the platform to activate the next one. Then use the platform to get the next canister.

When you partner is on the upper switch have Jar Jar jump to the ledge where you got this canister and have R2 access the ledge on the left for the canister.

Lift the blue vehicle and grab the studs underneath it. Activate the red switch and continue activating them until you have to switch a lever. Pull both levers and go through.

On the last platform jump to the right with Jar Jar for a canister.

Use double jump attacks on Dooku. When he retreats use the force to stop objects hitting you. Do double jump attacks when controlling Yoda and use the Force to send back the fireballs.

Before starting the battle go to the back of the room and use the Force to reassemble

the pillar. Have Jar Jar jump to the top and then to the ledge in the wall above you. Use Panaka to shoot the case and grab the canister. Drop to the floor and shoot both targets on the wall to get the other canister. Along the left wall is a metal chute. Send Anakin (boy) into the chute to get some items. At the end of the ledge use Amidala to grapple to grab the final canister for the level.

EPISODE III: REVENGE OF THE SITH

CHAPTER 1 - BATTLE OVER CORUSCANT

Like the pod race, you'll have to shoot containers holding the LEGO canisters here. If you fly along the length of the ship and dive towards the planet you'll find the first canister. Continue to dive until you come to the next ship and then head right to find another canister. When you see five red circles, shoot them and go through the ship. Grab the canister floating and then go underneath another cruiser for another one. Head for the specialist ship to find a container with a canister inside. When you come to the large ship stay close to the main body to find another canister. Shoot the red circles on the bridge to damage the cruiser. Make your way to the next specialist ship for another canister. There's also a canister at the jets of one of the enemy ships. When you're heading for the last specialist ship grab the last canister floating around. Then when you see the two blue lights, shoot them to open up the bay.

CHAPTER 2 - CHANCELLOR IN PERIL

Scour the area for studs and use the Force on the all the objects in the area to get even more.

Have Amidala grapple to the ledge above for the canister.

Deflect the shots from the droids then use the Force on the red levers for studs and the blue levers for other items. In the next hallway, use the Force on some more levers for more items. Kill the droids and pull the levers at the end. Collect the studs in the area then move the LEGO blocks to build a platform to reach the next walkway. Kill some droids then move the yellow grates. Follow the walkway into a small room to find studs and a canister on top of some equipment. Head through the tunnel now and eliminate anything inside. Meet up with R2 and have him open the locked door for some studs and a canister. Open the next door and use the Force to move the equipment so it explodes and creates a ramp.

Use TC-14 to open the other door here for studs and a canister.

Kill the droids and then double jump along the wall to grab a blue stud. Pick up the other studs and then run to the end of the walkway for the canister.

Have Jar Jar jump into the alcove for the canister.

Head along the right side of the arena to collect items and turn on the fan in the area. Use the fan to get to the next area. Grab the studs and have R2 open the door. Take out Dooku and the droids and then collect the studs and explode the barrels. Run upstairs and use double jump attacks to take down Dooku. Collect the studs in the area then go to the room at the top of the stairs. Destroy the box in the room and have R2 unlock the next door. Collect the studs and another canister.

Have C-3PO unlock the other two doors here for studs and a canister.

Battle your way through guards and droids. Go to the left and right of the control room for canisters. Use the Force to activate the levers and get ready for a cutscene.

CHAPTER 3 - GENERAL GRIEVOUS

Quickly land a double jump attack and then switch to the Clone and shoot the containers near Grievous. Then use the double jump attacks again on him. When he leaves, use the Force on the LEGO pieces to build a bridge. Double jump around the stone to find two canisters. Then head back to where you were. Cross the bridge and climb the stairs. Get the next lot of LEGO bricks and create some platforms to grab a canister.

A second canister is here but can only be grabbed with Jar Jar.

Follow the ledges until you find Grievous. Get the next set of LEGO blocks out of the wall and build a box. Have the clone jump on it and shoot at the container. Stack the LEGO and climb to the top. Break the tan blocks in the wall to find a hole. Move the container inside to the ledge on the far right, then blow it up with the clone. Drop down to the ledge's right and collect the studs. Follow the path left and shoot the barrier to find a canister. Return to the trail and head right. When you reach the end, drop down and collect the next canister.

Have Jar Jar jump on the container you moved to collect the canister. Follow the ledge along the wall to the right to find more studs and another canister. When you come to the stone bridge have R2 hover over to grab another canister. Follow the bridge and detonate all the mines by getting close to them and running away. Pull the levers with the Force then grab the canister that appears.

Go back to the hole in the cliff and double jump to the ledge on the right. Go back to the LEGO bridge and get ready for Grievous. Continue using double jump attacks until he's finished.

CHAPTER 4 - DEFENSE OF KASHYYYK

Have Chewbacca shoot each light twice and collect the studs lying around. Use the Force on the panel to lower the bridge. Follow the trail of studs and shoot the copper pipes at the end for even more. Use the Force to remove the middle tube for the canister. Break the tubes for more items then go back to the trail. Follow the studs to the clones. Kill them once they start shooting you. Shoot out the lights again for studs then fix the controls to the bridge. Cross the bridge and kill the clones. Use Chewie to get the next level and





the one above that for the hostage.

Have R2 hover to the platform and have Chewbacca grapple to the platform above you. Then have Jar Jar get the canister.

Regroup with Yoda and run around the tree to get items. Shoot the clones then cross the bridge. Head over the bridge and grapple to the ledge above for a canister. Destroy the containers on the ground for more items. Use the Force on the machinery then grapple to the platform above. Free the wookiee and destroy more containers. Head down the last bridge and save the final Wookiee. Go down the bridge on the left and stand on the floor button. Then follow the bridge to the next area. Destroy everything and everyone in the area and scoop up all the studs remaining.

Collect the three carrots and have Jar Jar collect the canister.

Go to the beaches edge and use Jar Jar to jump to the top. Have R2 hover to the platform for the canister.

On the side of the beach are more valuables. Use the Force on the plants and then grapple to small walkway. Shoot the targets on the back wall and go right for the canister. Jump down to the open gate and smash up the droids. Head back to the start collecting studs along the way. Pull up the plants and use the force on the brown pieces to create a boat. Jump in and go.

Use the Force to raise the X-Wing and have Jar Jar jump on board and double jump to get the canister.

Follow the studs and then attack the next set of droids while moving forward.

When the trail wraps to the right have Vader break the plant. Then have Chewie get to the ledge above and R2 hover to grab the canister.

Continue along the trail. When it turns right along the wall head left for a blue stud. Now head for the AT-ST. Keep your distance and shoot it with the blaster. Collect the studs once it goes down and pull up the plants for even more. Climb the stairs and head up the dirt ramp. Use the Force on the boulders then use Chewie to grapple to the canister on the ledge. Follow the ramp and move the LEGO pieces to create stairs. Climb them and step on the switch. Use the same

strategy as before on the walker and collect the studs when they appear. Go down the side trail and activate the latches with the Force. Then slice them up and hop in the ship.

Before getting in the rocket, jump on top with Jar Jar and have him grab the canister

CHAPTER 5 - RUIN OF THE JEDI

Kill the clones once they start shooting at you.

Have Jar Jar climb up the red starship and double jump to get the canister.

Pull out the LEGO pieces then stack them next to the building. Have Jar Jar jump on top and grab the other canister.

Continue along and smash everything for studs.

Have Chewie grapple to the ledge. Then double jump to smash out the window and reveal a canister.

Defeat the next swarm of clones then rip off the giant doors with the Force. Run down the hallway and collect any studs. Kill more clones and use the Force on the brown LEGO to create stairs. Climb up and use the Force on all the objects to find a blue stud and a bunch of others lying around. Then use the Force on the sphere. Destroy the three balls when they appear and then put the sphere on the broken pillar. Run up the stairs and kill more clones. Go into the next room and slay all the enemies. Use the Force on everything in the room to find more studs. When you come to the half sphere, use the Force on it and then do a double jump underneath it to smash it. Collect the studs and remove the red LEGO caps on the side. Head downstairs and collect more items.

Have R2 hover to the door's side for a canister.

Kill the clones then use the Force to stack the chairs into a high pile. Go back down the hall you were in and kill some more clones. Smash the containers in here and then smash all the clones coming to get you.

Head to the left area of the intersection and use Chewie to grapple to the ledge above for a bunch of studs.

Head down the hall and kill some more enemies. Smash all the boxes you come across for extra studs. When the hallway



widens search the area for two blue studs. Go into the next room and smash all the containers inside. Use the Force to pull out all the shelves for even more studs. Once you've pulled out all the shelves in the wall, jump until you reach the top. Use the Force on the switch and grab the canister off the ledge. Drop to the ground and run to the next room. Do the same thing again with the shelves in the wall and step on the red switch when you see it. Head into the third room and do it all over again. Activate the next switch and move through to the next room.

Use Jar Jar to grab the LEGO canister that's too high to reach.

When you see the platform lower after hitting the three switches, have Jar Jar jump on top of it. Go to the walkway on the left and over the shield blocking the room. Use C-3PO to deactivate the shield. Then have Obi-Wan move from room to room doing the shelf tricks and activate the switches. Go back to the upper walkway and grab the canister.

Kill the next lot of droids and use the Force on the switch at the end.

CHAPTER 6 - DARTH VADER

Follow Anakin as soon as he starts running. When you come to the end of the hall grab the canister on the left wall. Use the support on the four beams to give you some extra time to get out of there. Then use it again on the four levers along the wall. Go behind the alcove and get the next canister. At the back of the room is another canister. Slice up the yellow and grey canister and grab the next canister. Continue to the back of the room for another one. Go along the right side of the room and hit all the switches. Collect the studs then double jump on the red knobs for even more loot.

Use R2 to open the locked door on the left and collect the canister.

Use the Force to remove the beams then again on the locks. When you're outside grab the canister next to Anakin. Follow him across, run to the right and use the Force on all the LEGO in the wall. Smash everything inside then step on the switch. Jump on the platform that lowers and get the next canister. On the next walkway use the Force on the yellow knob. Continue to the right - when the steam disappears, put the bolts on the large dial in the wall. Use the Force to turn the dial and bring up the next platform. Jump across the beams and to the rocky platform. Move fast and grab the next canister. Continue moving platform to platform for another canister. Jump back to the original platform and make your way to the top for the final showdown.

Use R2 to get to the platform out of reach on the left.

Stick to the back of the island use jump attacks on Anakin to beat him. Keep attacking until the final scene. Then go back to Dexter's and unlock the bonus level *Episode IV: A New Hope*.

WHAT IS RE-PLAY?

This section will breathe new life into your old games. Each month we'll show you amazing things to find or set challenges for you to take up against us. We also welcome input from you. Write in and tell us if you've found something cool that you'd like to share with the other readers. Even if you haven't found anything yourself, write in and tell us what game you'd like to get more out of and we'll do the searching for you. Email us at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au or send it the old-fashioned way to PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355.

There's nothing worse than shelling out the big bucks on a game you play for a few weeks before it falls behind the TV. We've been digging around the games room looking for any old gems we can temporarily resurrect for you lot, and your own secrets and challenges have been great so far. Keep them coming people!

Be sure to check out our official challenges too. Record on videotape or photograph your best efforts and send them in to PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW, 1355, clearly marked "OPS2 Challenges". We'll print the top results in future issues. The highest score in each of the two official challenges will win the game of the month, so go nuts!

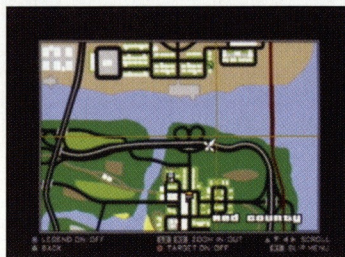
WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

There's something fishy going on here...



UNDER THE SEA

Rick Price, QLD, found this crazy glitch in *GTA: San Andreas* while on one of his random statewide crime sprees. Dive in the water between Los Santos and Las Venturas, just a little northeast of the symmetrical freeway exit-ramps. You should notice a collection of rocks and weeds. Swim down to the large, flat rock that rests just beside the water's edge on the Los Santos side and swim around the weedy area. CJ should go from swimming to standing on the rock. At this point you can stroll around the ocean floor at will. You can even spawn a vehicle to drive or fly around! If you spawn a Rhino you can blast boats away from beneath the surface, and if you spawn a Hydra you can fly right out of the water!



WALKING ON AIR!

Before you've unlocked Las Venturas, take a helicopter or jetpack to the red bridge in the northwest corner of the map. Fly over the roadblock and towards the first set of pillars. Get to the second highest vertical bar and go towards the two pillars. You should be able to descend slowly until you hit an invisible surface. This surface lasts a short distance away from the bridge and you can run towards the Las Venturas side without falling off for about half the bridge. If you're unsure where you can walk, just take out a gun and shoot the ground. A bullet spark will mark the spot. Note: You can only do this before you've unlocked Las Venturas – after that it seems to disappear.

DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD

Activate two-player mode and allow the second player to attack CJ with a katana. After a few swipes they'll lop CJ's head right off and two-player mode will end. However, a headless CJ will reappear at the two-player icon – complete with ridiculous amounts of blood gushing out his neck! You can still do everything you normally can – drive, fly, work-out, etc – but everywhere you take him you'll leave a trail of claret behind him. Dying and being arrested will not replace your skull, so make sure you don't overwrite your precious saved game while headless!

CAR CRAZY!

Want to know how many laps of the Nurburgring this one hundred year old antique can complete in 24 hours? Bugger all, according to Sam Gardiner of Victoria. We're not sure whether he was in A-spec or B-spec (we're praying for the sake of his social life it was the latter) but according to Sam this centurion automobile has a top speed of around 16km/h and only completed a meagre 13 laps. That's almost two hours a lap! He came dead last. Resident GT4 guru Luke estimates he would've been lapped over 170 times by each other opponent. We couldn't ignore this amazing (and a little stupid) test of human patience. Don't try this at home kids. Seriously, don't.



LEGO DANCIN'

If you explore every room in the level "Discovery on Kamino." You will come upon a somewhat dark room with two or three Kaminoans in it, a blue stud behind a forcefield, several spots on the floor and what look like speakers on the wall. Use the Force to transform these speakers into decks and walk onto spots on the floor. Wait for the other character to move onto another spot, or have the second player do it if you're not playing alone. Other spots will light up, so walk onto one of the remaining unlit spots, allowing time for your partner character to do the same. Eventually, all of the spots will be lit. When that happens, disco lights will begin to flash, a funky version of the Star Wars theme will play, and the Kaminoans will begin to get down!

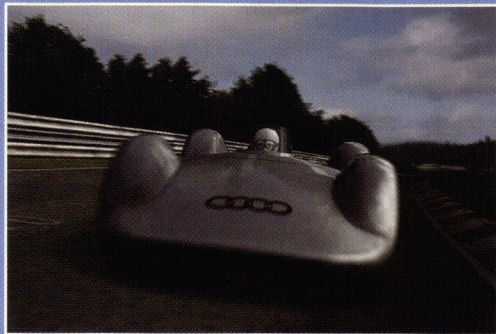




WINNERS

We have no doubt parents, siblings and partners all over the country have been driven totally mad this month. We could practically hear the sound of OPS2 readers belting out Maroon 5 in *SingStar Party* and the whine of screaming engines burning up the test track in *Gran Turismo 4* from our office! The winner of each challenge has a freshly-plucked copy of the superb *God of War* on the way to them. Well, as soon as we can prise them out of Phill's hands that is (why he thinks he needs both of them though is a complete mystery to us!). Congratulations to all the tuning wizards and karaoke gods and goddesses who entered!

JULY READER CHALLENGE - GRAN TURISMO 4 - SPEED SQUEEZE



TOP SCORES!

Phil Wilson-Lowe, VIC
582.91 kmph

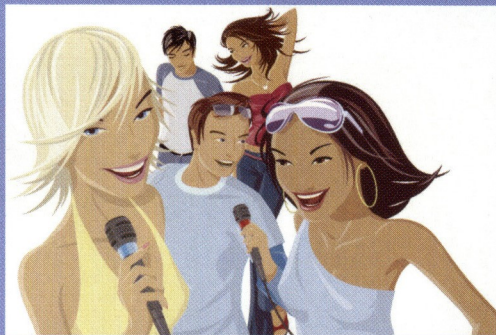
Simon Kent, QLD
582.80 kmph

Anthony Karam, QLD
582.78 kmph

Victor Fung, SA
579.59 kmph

Andrew Strazzeri, NSW
512.04 kmph

JULY CHALLENGE - SINGSTAR PARTY - SUPERSTAR!



TOP SCORES!

Brad Hook, SA
9020

Samantha King, NSW
9000

Amy Zawerta, QLD
8960

Nicole Seyler, WA
8830

Michael Taylor, NSW
7940

READER CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE!



J RINALDI - SA

My longest basketball shot in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* is 32.7 metres, but can anyone beat 52 metres?



smashingtoxin - OPS2 FORUM

Defeat the powerhouse side of England using the weak USA team in *Rugby 2005*. It's possible, but very hard.



MARK NICHOLLS - via email

In *Rugby League*, choose a friendly match between NSW and QLD with a difficulty of schoolboy at either Telstra or Suncorp Stadium. See how many points you can rack up in 20 minutes. My best is 113!

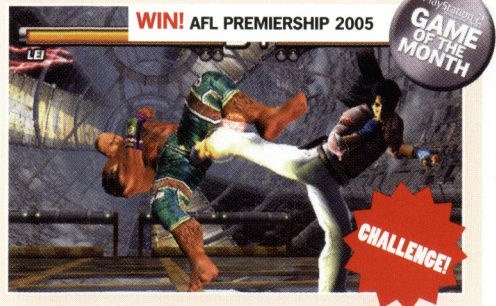


WENDY CLARK - via email

Beat *Destroy All Humans!* in under 12 hours!

OFFICIAL CHALLENGE

Enter the *Tekken*! Crack those knuckles and get ready to bust some skulls people - *Tekken 5*'s the name and survival's the game. Wait, maybe that should be the other way around? Anyway, break out your copies of *Tekken 5* and head to survival mode. You can choose any character you wish - we'd hardly prevent you from using your preferred brawler now would we? You'll have to beat seven to make it onto the records screen, but aim for a few more than that! In the event of a tie we'll choose the ultimate survivor at random. Photograph or record your best survival score and send it clearly marked via post or email to the usual address. Don't forget to get your entries in before September 10. Punch on!



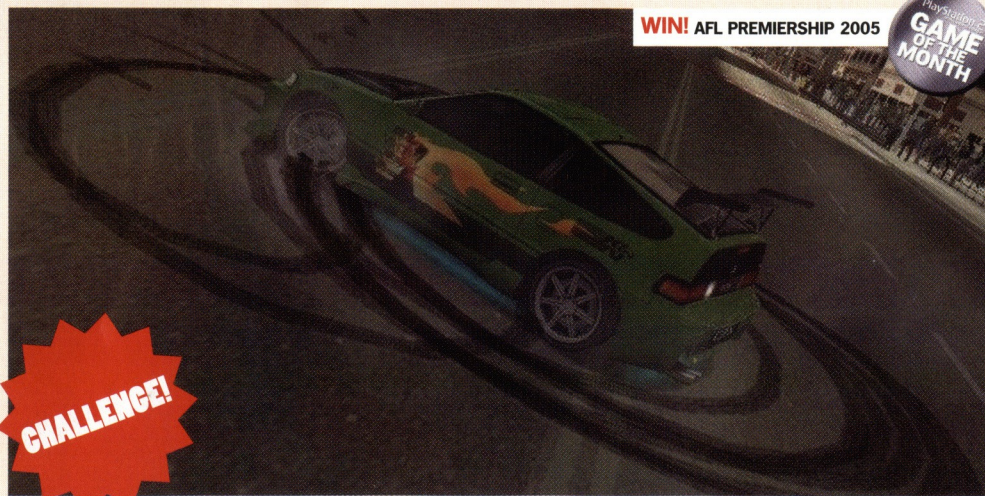
WIN! AFL PREMIERSHIP 2005

PlayStation 2
GAME
OF THE
MONTH

CHALLENGE!

OFFICIAL READER CHALLENGE

If the charts are anything to go by it looks like *Juiced* has been squeezing its way into PS2s all across the country. Its a good thing Jay Barrett from SA has sent in this challenge then, isn't it. Jay fancies himself as a bit of a showoff, so he's thrown down a showoff showdown. Using the car of your choice, head to showoff mode and hit the oval at Angel North Central. It's a faster and wider track than the other closed circuit so you can get good speed for drifting and plenty of width for 360s and boomerang turns. Make sure you pimp your ride first to boost your car multiplier. The runs are set for three minutes and Jay insists you'll need over 50,000 points to compete. Don't forget to get your entries in before September 10!



WIN! AFL PREMIERSHIP 2005

PlayStation 2
GAME
OF THE
MONTH

CHALLENGE!

CODE VAULT

Want to cheat your way to victory? We've got you covered!



Destroy All Humans!

These cheats can be activated during mission in the pause menu. Hold **△**, then enter the code.

Unlimited Ammo

←, ○, △, →, △, ○

Max Alert Meter

→, ○, △, △, →, △

Invincibility

○, ○, ←, ←, ○, ○

Unlimited Mind Power

△, △, ○, →, △, ○

Resets Alert Meter

△, →, △, △, ○, →

These cheats must be entered on the Furon Mothership. Hold **△**, then enter the code.

More Upgrades

○, ○, ←, ←, ○, ○

(The code is the same as the Invincibility code, but it has a different effect)

Increase DNA

△, △, △, △, ←, →, ←, →, △, △

B-Movie Theater Unlockables

Furon Down!

Complete Furon Down!



Outro Movie

Complete Attack of the 50ft President

Plan 9 from Outer Space

Complete Teenage Zombies from Outer Space

Teenagers from Outer Space

Complete Attack of the 50ft President

Tip: More DNA from Brain

Extractions

To gain additional DNA from brain extractions, complete all of the main missions.

Madagascar

Enter these codes during gameplay.

Level Select

△, △, ○, △, △, ×, △, △, △

Invincibility

↑, ↓, ×, ×, △, △, △, △, △, △, ○, ○

All Power-ups

○, ×, ×, ○, △, △, ○, △, △, △

Spy vs. Spy

Enter the extras menu and select the cheat option. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear.

Invincibility

ARMOR

All Weapons

WRKBENCH

All Single Player Modern Mode Levels

PROHIAS

All Story Mode Levels

ANTONIO

All Multiplayer Levels

MADMAG

All Spy Attachments

DISGUISE

All FMV Sequences

SPYFLIX

All Concept Art

SPYPICS

Predator: Concrete Jungle

Jungle Hunter Costume (from Predator)

Kill Irish boss in the Midsummer Night's Massacre mission.

Alien Hunter Costume

Kill all snipers at the area where you have to kill the lieutenants. (A Night To Remember mission)

Dark Blade Clan Costume

Ignore the first set of enemies and go and find a man to kill. (Extinction event)

City Hunter Costume (from Predator 2)

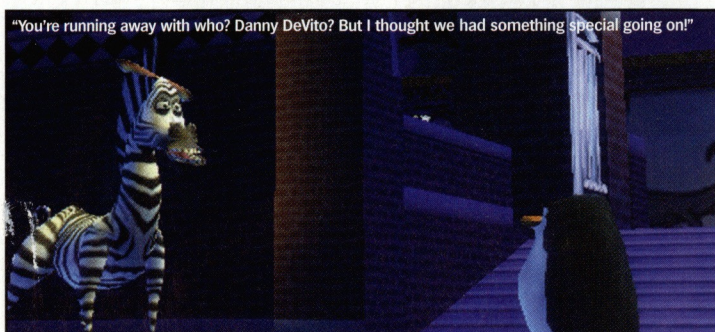
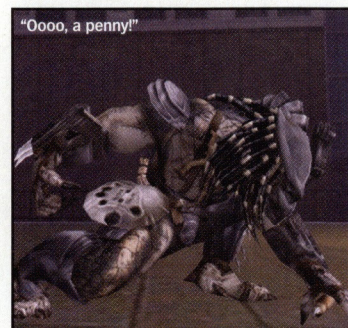
Kill 50 aliens (Bug Hunt mission)

Bad Blood Costume and Maul Upgrade

Destroy the big computer up on the top at the start of the level. (The New Flesh mission)

Ritual Armour Costume

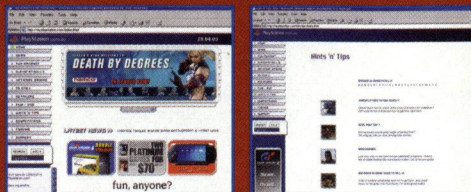
Destroy three series' of vehicles that have stolen technology. (Under The Gun mission)



ULTIMATE CHEAT SITE



HEAD ON OVER TO [HTTP://AU.PLAYSTATION.COM/](http://au.playstation.com/) TO GET THE ULTIMATE CHEAT FIX. YOU'LL NEED TO REGISTER WITH THE SITE (BUT IT'S FREE AND EASY TO DO) THEN YOU'LL HAVE FULL ACCESS TO ALL THE CHEATS.



GET YOURSELF OVER TO
[HTTP://AU.PLAYSTATION.COM](http://au.playstation.com)

SNEAK PEEK: ASS KICKIN' VIDEO GAMES SPECIAL!

**FREE
STICKERS!**

URBAN **HITZ**

HIP-HOP AND R&B DOWN UNDER

EXPOSED!

METHOD MAN

Reveals the inside of the music biz

MUST READ!

CRAIG DAVID

He's back to rule R&B once again

EXCLUSIVE!

DAWN RAID

NZ's music powerhouse hits Oz

50 CENT

THE G UNIT MASTERMIND WHO WON'T BE STOPPED!

RANDOM

Australia's newest R&B stars

AREA CODES:

25

HOT hip-hop acts and the regions they represent: East Coast, West Coast, Dirty South and Midwest!

ON SALE NOW!

Russell Simmons, Xzibit, Damon Dash, Phrase, Lemar, Teairra Mari, Jae Millz, Fast Crew Anecdote, Drapht, Common, Faith.

**BONUS
POSTERS**



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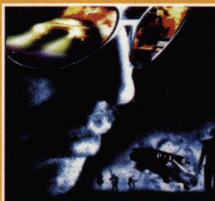
gamestation

Just got your PS2? Looking for a safe bet to blow your hard-earned on? *OPS2's* GameStation is your best resource for finding top quality PS2 games. Some might be a little long in the tooth, but you'll probably be able to pick them up second-hand. Others are latest releases or Platinum titles, so finding them won't be a hassle. All are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.



STUNTMAN

Harder than a teenage boy in the girls' showers, *Stuntman* doesn't just force you to play it well – it forces you to play it perfectly. You can literally measure the difference between success and failure in millimetres and milliseconds. A frustrating masterpiece.



CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

So challenging that most people give up hope after the first level. It's super quick, launches millions of deadly projectiles at you and never quits. The only way to win is retry every level until you absorb them directly into your brain and finger muscles.



DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

It's hard enough as it is, but we'd like to know how many suicides could have been prevented if the tough as nails 'Dante Must Die' difficulty level wasn't included. Insane.



MAXIMO VS THE ARMY OF ZIN

Not impossible, but an old-school three lives and limited continues format will send you back to square one, and just when you were getting to the business end. Dammit!



SHINOBI

Long stages, no checkpoints and death coming quickly and often means *Shinobi* is a test of true ninja patience. In other words, just like the original one.



AREA 51

Area 51 is a very cool little game and well worth a look for FPS shooters and twitchy loners who believe the truth is out there.

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30

An excellent game in a crowded market. A distinctly more mature take on war featuring levels of blood, foul language and sheer desperation not seen before. Sign up for this one.

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

It's eye-meltingly spunky and so fast you'll you won't be able to blink. Stop looking for an arcade racer that's more fun than *Burnout 3* – you won't be able to find one.

COLD WINTER

A surprisingly superb first-person shooter that brings a lot of fresh ideas, a lot of blood and a lot of carnage. Definitely worth checking out.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

WRC 4 has trumped it but *Colin* still has great damage modelling, slick handling and a roster of modern monsters and historical rally beasts.

DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

Buzzing with energy and conceptual originality, it's a game anyone can pick up and play. Not too deep, but annihilating puny Earthlings has never been more fun.

DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY

Deus Ex was the first ever FPS where the solution to your problems isn't always to go in guns blazing. Instead, it combines elements of RPG and strategy that force you to use creativity and lateral thinking to get through.

DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

This is the *Devil May Cry* you remember – stunning design, visuals, effects and presentation. It's a work of art so grab it or you'll be the one crying.

DRIV3R

Astonishing damage and brilliant driving physics. Screaming through cities in hulking muscle cars or 18-wheelers, *Driv3r* may be buggy – but it's every great Hollywood car chase crammed into one game.

ESPN NBA 2K5

Slick presentation, great graphics and innovative modes allows *ESPN NBA 2K5* to slam-dunk the competition.

ESPN NFL 2K5

If every game had the attention to detail this puppy had this list would be a helluva lot longer. Awesome broadcast-style presentation, great graphics and deep gameplay.

ESPN NHL 2K5

We'll be pucked if you can find a better game of ice hockey for the price of *ESPN NHL 2K5*. Deep and rewarding, improved fighting controls and sexy visuals.

EYETOY: PLAY 2

Do we need to explain? The innovation and introduction of the video camera to gaming is brilliant. It's just one reason why the PS2 is so cutting edge. Absolutely essential.

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2

All the strategy, violence and glitzy thrills of boxing minus the brain damaging concussions. If it were a boxer it would rightly quip, 'I am the greatest'.

FINAL FANTASY X

This was one of the first games on the PS2 to really try and stretch the machine's graphics capabilities to the limit. The result is simply breathtaking.

FLATOUT

FlatOut's minigames are worth the asking price alone. The PS2's best demolition derby racer – fantastic damage, fantastic handling, fantastic fun!

FORMULA ONE 05

Essential for F1 fans – the closest you'll get to the cockpit of a Ferrari without being shot by Michael Schumacher's bodyguards.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

For the first time ever, commanding squads and third-person shooting is so easy you won't even notice you're doing it. If you don't have it – find it.

FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR

The bomb for strategy nuts, intense street skirmishes and ultra-realistic gameplay based on authentic military tactics. It may be a bit too dull for some, however.

THE GETAWAY

No coin collection, no magic bonuses, just a whole lot of gritty crime action set in a tough old city. Swearing, violence and not a shred of political correctness...

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

A totally cinematic and engaging experience let down by too few gameplay improvements. It's like a potty-mouthed version of *The Bill*.

GOD OF WAR

God of War combines bloody action, puzzle-solving and cliff jumping in a brilliantly realised, beautiful-looking epic that rocks HARD on every level. An essential classic for action junkies.

GRAND THEFT AUTO III

Revolutionary, open-ended gameplay that has spawned many an imitator, *GTAIII* is not only a watershed for the PS2 – it has changed games forever. If you don't own this you're reading the wrong magazine.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Takes everything great about *GTAIII*, adds countless extra features and paints it in '80s pastel colours. This game does almost nothing wrong.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

This is the greatest videogame ever made. Run, drive, fly, swim, boat, cycle, ride or even skydive your way through a whole state of mayhem. It's beyond debate – this is gaming perfection.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

The ultimate realism of the 150+ cars – each made up of more than 4000 polygons – made *GT3* THE racing sim. That was, until *GT4*, of course.

GRAN TURISMO 4

The biggest, most authentic and most realistic racing simulator ever. 700 unique cars from 1886 to 2005 that handle exactly like their real-world counterparts. It's a car nut's wet dream.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASIN

It's ethically dubious but there's no doubt about how good *Silent Assassin* is. Multiple solutions, fantastic rag-doll physics and enough atmosphere to choke a horse.

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

Doesn't really flow as well as *Silent Assassin* did, but retains the multiple solutions, an arsenal of weapons, an award winning score and great level design. Tense and uncompromising.

ICO

The dreamy-looking, wonderfully peaceful puzzling adventure gameplay, along with an entirely unique feel make people fall in love with *Ico*. Experience it for yourself!

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

It features large sprawling lands where the weather changes as often as it does in Sydney, hundreds of fun mini-games, challenges and missions. Wicked fun.

JAK II: RENEGADE

Infusing *GTA*-style gameplay into the *Jak & Daxter* world has made this the first platformer that appeals to both infants and adults alike.

JAK 3

Rounds out the trilogy in style – *Jak's* evolution from pixie-eared pansy to platforming badass is complete. Great mix of genres that'll keep you on your toes to the end.

JAMES BOND: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

What makes it great: The change to a third-person perspective allowed *Bond's* shooting, car chasing and fighting to be brought together in the first game that really feels like a *Bond* movie.

JUICED

It can't match *Midnight Club 3* for thrills, but it boasts a far more impressive stable for car lovers than *NFSU2*. Not revolutionary, but a solid racer for hardcore rev-heads.

KILLZONE

Some of the best weapons and reload animations on PS2, atmospheric battle zones and brilliant character design. Very ambitious, just a little sloppy around the edges.

KINGDOM HEARTS

In spite of the Disney characters and settings that make it seem just for kids, *Kingdom Hearts* poses a surprisingly difficult yet rewarding challenge for RPG fans.

LEGO STAR WARS

Parents should buy *LEGO Star Wars* for their kids, no matter how old they are. It's the most fun we've had pushing coloured blocks around since *Tetris*. Easily the best game based on the *Star Wars* prequels.

LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING

Gorgeous and packed to the gills with sword-swinging action, it's as close as it gets to being in the movie without having to go to New Zealand.

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

The sense of freedom the game allows you to feel is unrivalled. Seamless transitions from space battles to FPS action give a real sense of a huge world that you inhabit.

MASHED

Totally addictive multiplayer – make sure you've got a multitap. This is why you got into gaming to begin with.

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE

The opening level, the beach landing on Omaha, is perhaps one of the most atmospheric and moving game moments to date. Still one of the PlayStation 2's best shooters.

MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN

It's surprisingly short but it's got some pretty awe-inspiring moments. Escape a sinking battleship in Pearl Harbour; sink a Japanese aircraft carrier – all in a day's work.

METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM

It combined an explosive single-player experience that features a hilarious story with smashing multiplayer games. Need to know more?

MERCENARIES

An impeccably designed and action-packed sandbox of free-roaming combat. Steal choppers, jack tanks – *Mercenaries* is fun, fun, fun 'til the commies take you C4 away.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

It's the ultimate lone-soldier adventure, packed with riveting combat and a stunning jungle setting. Acquire immediately.

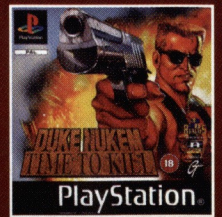
Your definitive guide to the ever-expanding library of PlayStation 2 games

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION	OVERALL 09
Rockstar has given you lots of ways to enjoy this game but no matter how you play it, it's quality from start to finish. Tuner cars, muscle cars, luxury cars, SUVs, superbikes, choppers – all faster than a greased cheetah.	
MIDWAY'S ARCADE TREASURES	OVERALL 08
The other arcade classics are good fun for a while but it's really about Root Beer Tapper – hands-down the best simulation of serving beer to rowdy drunks ever.	
MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION	OVERALL 08
Still a great fighter, despite a few rough edges. Multiple fatalities and environmental fatalities keep the gore to a maximum.	
MOTOGP4	OVERALL 08
A solid racer that covers a lot of bases, but <i>MotoGP5</i> will have to take it up a gear to stay in front.	
MX UNLEASHED	OVERALL 08
One of the best MX games on PS2. Huge freestyle countryside, great riding physics and addictive bonus vehicles like a stunt plane, Baja Buggy, monster truck and even a chopper. Spot on.	
NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND	OVERALL 09
2 fast and 2 furious for the likes of most other street racers, the drag racing mode alone is worth the price of admission. Get in, buckle up, shut up and hang on!	
NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND 2	OVERALL 09
Bigger, badder and faster than its already impressive older brother, if the huge city and extra rides can't satisfy your need for speed we don't know what will.	
ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE	OVERALL 09
An epic time-travelling samurai adventure featuring everyone's favourite Frenchman Jean Reno. A classic in anyone's book.	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME	OVERALL 09
It captures everything that made the original a classic and combines it with slick graphics, smooth gameplay and a hot chick to fight alongside you.	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN	OVERALL 09
It's gone down a decidedly darker road than its enchanting predecessor but it still one of the best adventures money can buy.	
PROJECT: SNOWBLIND	OVERALL 08
Kicks off with a bang and never lets up. Gob-smacking graphics, an explosive arsenal and consistently exiting and varied gameplay.	
PROJECT ZERO II: PROJECT BUTTERFLY	OVERALL 09
Quite possibly the scariest game ever made – <i>Project Zero II</i> plays superbly. Wear dark undies though.	
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4	OVERALL 09
If you enjoy sports games, especially long bouts of multiplayer tomfoolery – look no further. Best soccer action on PS2.	
PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY	OVERALL 09
This psychic-charged jaunt takes the third-person shooter, levitates it into the air and makes it slap itself involuntarily.	
THE PUNISHER	OVERALL 08
Far more loyal to comic than it's celluloid sibling – bring on the bullets, break out the body bags and prepare for punishment. You won't regret it.	
RATCHET AND CLANK 2: LOCKED AND LOADED	OVERALL 09
The sheer number of the gadgets and crazy weapons alone would make this game worth playing. Hilarious fun.	
RATCHET AND CLANK 3: UP YOUR ARSENAL	OVERALL 09
The single player game is fantastic, but the online multiplayer mode puts most other shooters to shame. Great gadgets and humour abound.	
RED DEAD REVOLVER	OVERALL 08
A great spaghetti western shooter bursting with cool characters, duels and frontier towns, brilliant presentation and a sweet Sergio Leone-style soundtrack.	
RESIDENT EVIL CODE VERONICA X	OVERALL 09
Huge, scary and full of flesh-chewing zombies, RE: CVX still looks appetising after more than two years. No wonder gamers are already salivating for <i>Resident Evil 4</i> .	
RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN	OVERALL 08
What's the only enemy that's less popular than Nazis or zombies? You guessed it, Zombified Nazis! A slick shooter set during a very fictional part of WWII.	
REZ	OVERALL 09
Super-stylish retro-futuristic graphics, intense old-skool shoot-'em-up gameplay and pumping dance tracks from top artists which remix themselves as you play.	
RUGBY 2005	OVERALL 08
Minor AI quibbles aside we've finally got a game of rugby that looks as good as other top-tier sports titles. About bloody time, too!	
RUGBY LEAGUE	OVERALL 08
League fans have long been neglected in the videogame world, but no more – this captures all the action of the NRL in one satisfying package.	
SECOND SIGHT	OVERALL 09
Stylish, gripping and great fun. Possess your enemies, throw them around the room with your mind or just shoot 'em. Definitely worth looking into.	
SHADOW OF ROME	OVERALL 08
A superb realisation of bloody arena combat. Some of the maximus fun you can have with a sword. For those who are about to die – we salute you.	
SILENT HILL 3	OVERALL 09
One of the nastiest games on PS2 – arguably scarier than <i>Silent Hill 4</i> . We dare you to play it alone with the lights out.	
THE SIMPSONS: HIT AND RUN	OVERALL 08
When it comes to GTA rip-offs they don't get any more blatant than this, but walking around a living and breathing Springfield is so much fun that you won't care.	

SINGSTAR	OVERALL 09
Karaoke with an edge – this gem will change your lounge room forever and give your significant other a reason not to loathe the PS2.	
SINGSTAR PARTY	OVERALL 09
Another 30 songs to crucify and new multiplayer modes. It can even be used in conjunction with the first game.	
SINGSTAR POP	OVERALL 09
Another solid SingStar title at a bargain price. New modes, Australian and New Zealand tracks and a musical buffet ranging from Missy Higgins and Shannon Noll to The Dandy Warhols and Hoobastank. Sweet...	
SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES	OVERALL 08
Great platforming for all ages. Plenty of substance, great visuals and offbeat characters. Well worth a look – especially for the younger set.	
SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS	OVERALL 09
Without a shadow of a doubt, the best Network Gaming title for the PS2. Unparalleled game modes and options mean the online warfare will rage for years.	
SOUL CALIBUR II	OVERALL 10
It's the easiest fighting game to get into, but to be truly great will take years! The characters, weapons and the mind-blowing special moves are second to none.	
SPIDER-MAN 2	OVERALL 09
A massive, free-roaming Manhattan complete with every major landmark – swing, jump, sprint and dive anywhere you want. Best superhero game ever.	
SSX 3	OVERALL 09
It's one mountain with an avalanche of features. You decide whether you want to race against your arch-nemesis, hang out on the half-pipe or just explore. Snow joke.	
STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT	OVERALL 08
Live the battles from the Star Wars films on the front lines with weapons and vehicles from all the films so far. Need this game, you do.	
SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE	OVERALL 08
Simple, enjoyable game design at its finest. <i>Super Monkey Ball's</i> multiplayer mode is the only way you can play with your mates' balls and still look them in the eye.	
TEKKEN 4	OVERALL 09
Damn this game looks good. If Tekken was a girl she'd have Kylie Minogue's bon-bon and Shannon Elizabeth's jubbles.	
TEKKEN 5	OVERALL 09
Tekken 5 is a major improvement over Tekken 4 and is a must-own fighter for anyone with a PS2.	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	OVERALL 08
The best golf game on PS2. The single-player novelty may wear off but it's perfect when it's too wet for you and your mates to hit the greens.	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	OVERALL 10
The fastest, smoothest first-person shooter ever, complete with masses of challenges and link-up support for up to 16 players at once!	
TIMESPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT	OVERALL 09
More fun than we thought possible. Super smooth, super stylish and the best reason yet to go online!	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL	OVERALL 10
The level of immersion the game creates. The stealth combined with the shadowy environs truly add up to an involving experience. Plus the gadgets kick serious ass!	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	OVERALL 09
Adds a great multiplayer mode and a few new modes to the already brilliant package – it's just a little on the short side.	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY	OVERALL 09
Slick, stylish, and cooler than a Sugar Daddy, Chaos Theory is the best "pure" stealth game on the PS2. If you haven't got into the series yet, now is the perfect time.	
TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND	OVERALL 09
A huge Vice City-style playing area with more extreme skating and loads more missions to work through than previous Hawk games. And they were fantastic enough already!	
TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA	OVERALL 08
Its lack of originality saw it labelled by some as simply GTA: LA, but the addition of intense John Woo-style shootouts make this a brilliant, if brief, roller coaster ride.	
V8 SUPERCARS 2	OVERALL 09
Offensively good graphics, stunning real-time damage, great handling and our very own V8 Supercars and tracks. The game has everything! Why don't you own this already?	
VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 EVOLUTION	OVERALL 09
An amazingly intuitive, super-deep fighting system that uses three buttons in the best possible way so that fights are all based on reactions rather than memorised combos.	
WIPEOUT: FUSION	OVERALL 09
This game is a face-meltingly fast, futuristic roller coaster of a racing game from a series that modern gaming owes more to than some people realise. Enough said.	
WRC 4	OVERALL 09
Besides carrying the official license, WRC 4 also features authentic rally car handling, simple controls and some of the greatest rally courses this side of Gran Turismo.	
WWE: SMACKDOWN! VS RAW	OVERALL 09
The best there is, the best there was, and the best there ever shall be – at least, until the next Smackdown! of course.	
XIII	OVERALL 09
The graphics actually use cel shading to great effect (for one of the only times ever). You feel as if you've wandered into a three-dimensional comic book.	



"Come get some!" Okay, so Duke Nukem's trademark quip may have been ripped off from *Army of Darkness*, but there's no denying the Duke's place in videogame history. After making the jump from platform shooter to FPS on PC, Mr. Nukem hit the PlayStation in 1998 in his very own third-person shooter, *Duke Nukem: Time to Kill*. Duke travelled through time taking out alien scum who were attempting to change history and remove the Dukemeister from existence. It was nothing too spectacular, but the mix of Duke-style blasting and *Tomb Raider*-esque adventure worked surprisingly well.

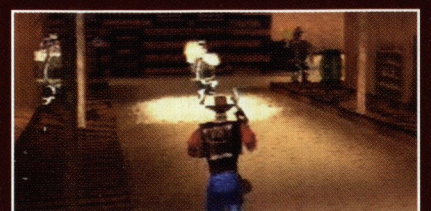


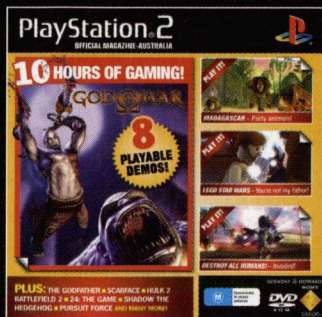
Why was it so fun? Because by becoming Duke Nukem you became a god amongst men. Nukem was a hark back to a world where action heroes hopped up on horse tranquilizers ruled all, a world that had begun to disappear the minute Lara and her blouse puppies swept onto the scene. Duke could handle any weapon, land any babe and had a one-liner on call for any situation. Any man who tells you he wouldn't want to be Duke Nukem for a day is a liar. That, or he misheard the question. So where is he now? The sequel, *Planet of the Babes*, was mostly shite and he disappeared soon after. Come on, dust off the Duke and bring him back!

LOVECHILD



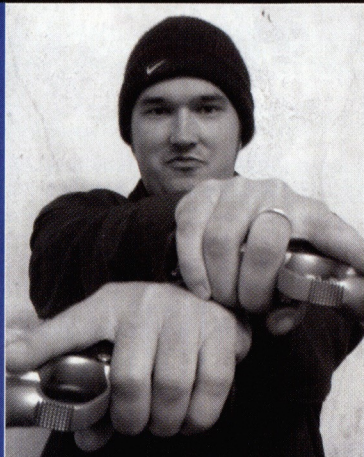
Duke's third-person exploring shenanigans said *Tomb Raider*, but his arsenal and itchy trigger finger said classic, old-skool Schwarzenegger. Bring it on!





on the dvd

PLAYABLE DEMOS



We spoil you guys rotten. This month we're giving you two of George W. Bush's favourite games – *God of War*, because that's what Bush likes to call himself around the White House, and *Madagascar*, because the story is simple enough for him to understand (although he probably couldn't spell it).

In case we've been too vague in previous issues about its awesomeness, *God of War* is one of the most intense and bloody action games you'll play this year. Our exclusive demo is the opening level of the game, where not only will you have to battle countless minions but also a giant Hydra that will eat you up like a Malteser.

There's no need for squeamish parents to worry, because the young ones will love *Madagascar*. There's a full level to explore that should tire out the little tykes before naptime. Some of the activities include squashing crabs with a hippo's bum, throwing lemurs with a giraffe and eating chilli while smashing crates.

We've also collected some of the best games already on shelves for anyone having trouble deciding what game to conquer next. We've brought back *Area 51*, *Brothers in Arms*, *Destroy All Humans!*, *Fight Night Round 2*, *LEGO Star Wars* and *Formula One 05* to help sort out that dilemma.

It doesn't get any better than this. You know it!

PAUL FREW
Staff Writer

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the **↓** and **↑** keys. To choose within a section use **←** and **→**. Press **ⓧ** to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

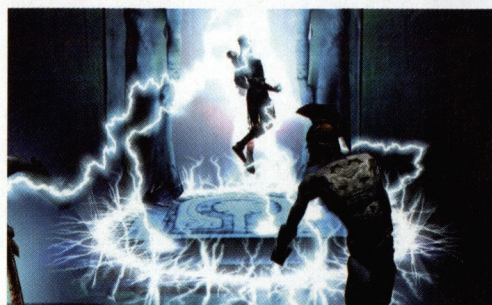
YOUR DISC

Every issue, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* brings you something no other magazine can – playable demos. Offering exclusive levels, tracks and missions, our playable DVD enables you try the very latest PS2 games before you buy, often weeks, even months before release. Why risk your hard-earned cash on a \$100 game when you can try it out on our cover-mounted DVD? From *Burnout 3* and *MGS3* to *Destroy All Humans!* and *Tekken 5*, we've always featured playable demos of the games that matter. Throw in top quality video footage of the hits of the future and our DVD is the best bargain on the shelves.

■ DISC PROBLEMS?

If your disc isn't working properly, simply send it back to this address for a replacement.

Demo Disc Returns
Official PlayStation 2 Magazine
P.O. Box 1037, Bondi Junction
NSW 1355



GOD OF WAR

DISTRIBUTOR: **SONY**

GAME TYPE: **ACTION**

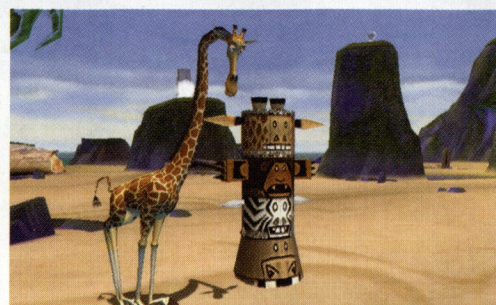
OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

Damn this is hot! In this demo you're going to be slicing, dicing and ripping wings off flying creatures onboard a warrior ship from the game's first level. All the controls and manoeuvres will be explained to you during gameplay, but you really only need to memorise **△** and **ⓧ** for attacks, and **⓪** for grapple. Try grappling the different beasts at least



once because some of the kills are bloody brilliant. The highlight of the level is the first confrontation with the giant Hydra. During this epic battle it will turn from hack and slash action into a rhythm game. Hit the right button at the right time and whammy – you've got yourself a new leather handbag for your girlfriend! This game has got everything!



MADAGASCAR

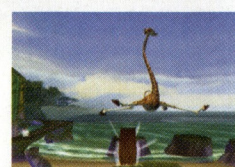
DISTRIBUTOR: **ACTIVISION**

GAME TYPE: **PLATFORMER**

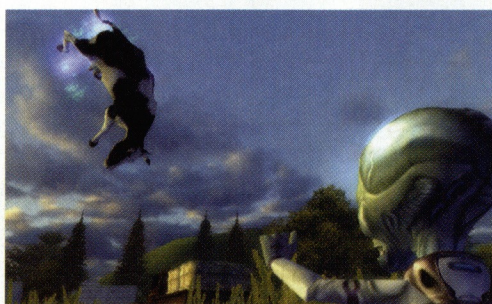
OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

Based on the movie of the same name, *Madagascar* will see you kicking back at the beach and completing various tasks for the local critters. You won't be sticking with the same animal for the entire demo though, as you'll need to utilise each character's unique strengths in order to complete all the tasks. For instance, Melman the



giraffe can reach high ledges with his helicopter-legs spin jumps, Marty the zebra is fast on his feet, Alex the lion is a mean brawler and Gloria the hippo can destroy anything with her big fat ass (if you ever offer her a seat – expect to get it back in pieces). It's time to go wild and complete all 10 tasks in the demo, now!



DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

DISTRIBUTOR: **THQ**

GAME TYPE: **ADVENTURE**

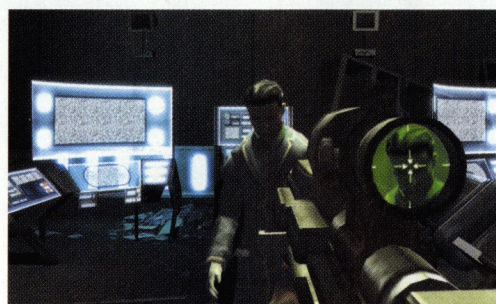
OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

We brought this baby back for anyone who missed it last month. Don't worry though, you don't need an anal probe to enjoy it – it just makes it "more realistic" (according to Naz). You'll be in hysterics within minutes of starting the demo; especially after electrocuting a farmer with your zapper and extracting his brain telekinetically,



destroying a building with your death ray, and throwing your first cow like a giant baseball with udders (hey Major League Baseball? If you're reading this – that's totally how you can make us watch your sport). Like the previous demo, this one has a time limit on it so you'll have to act fast to see everything *Destroy All Humans!* has to offer.



AREA 51

DISTRIBUTOR: **RED ANT**

GAME TYPE: **FPS**

OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

Area 51 throws you right into a clean-up mission, but if you're not careful you'll be the one cleaned up by the mutated aliens. This mission doesn't even give you time to take a deep breath (incidentally, you should probably go to the toilet beforehand). Get your trigger finger ready straight away because once the game has loaded you'll



be blowing away snarling beasts left, right and centre. Don't forget to collect everything dropped by the alien corpses because there'll be essentials like health and ammo that you'll desperately need in order to make it to the end of the level alive. Lock and load, soldier – it's time to succeed where Scully and Mulder failed.

Other magazines let you watch, OPS2 lets you play



BROTHERS IN ARMS

DISTRIBUTOR: **UBISOFT**

GAME TYPE: **FPS**

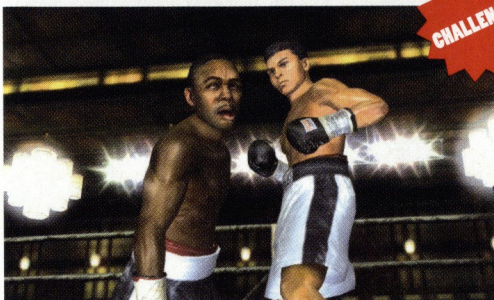
OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

This is perhaps the most intense war game OPS2 has ever played. In this demo you'll be picking your way through the French countryside in the game's opening level. If you remember how you felt when you watched *Saving Private Ryan* the first time, then you'll immediately recognise the feelings you have when your plane gets



shot out of the sky and crashes to the ground. Forget about memorising all the controls on the load screen because your commander will shout them out to you and tell you everything you need to know about avoiding bloodstains on your shirt during the mission. If you haven't played this yet then do yourself a favour – you won't regret it.



FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2

DISTRIBUTOR: **EA**

GAME TYPE: **SPORTS**

OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1-2**

Time to knock out some teeth. You'll be throwing down a fisticuff with either Bernard Hopkins or Ricky Hatton and yes, it will make a difference who you choose. Bernard is a tank and can fire off round after round of jaw-shattering jabs. Keep your face away from his fists as much as you can because if he lands one good shot then you'll be making out



with the canvas. Hatton is fast and can land a quick jab but he's going to need to land a lot of them to knock down the big man. There's only three rounds, so if you manage to get to the judge's decision then you better put in one hell of a performance.

CHALLENGE!

Knock out your opponent in the first round!

CHALLENGE!



FORMULA ONE 05

DISTRIBUTOR: **SONY**

GAME TYPE: **RACING**

OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

If you're the type of person who stays up late to see Schumacher win another race (or lose another race, if we're talking about season 2005) then you should have finished this game by now. As for the rest of you – get the real need for speed right here. As you'll find out fast, *Formula One 05* has been given a major re-tune. Our favourite new



feature is the blur effect which now gives you the feeling you're zooming along at over 200kmph. If you didn't beat our challenge last month (getting a race time of under 4:19) then try it again! We keep beating it every day. Luke's got both hands on pole at the moment, and a race time of 4:00. See if you can top that.



LEGO STAR WARS

DISTRIBUTOR: **EIDOS**

GAME TYPE: **ADVENTURE**

OUT: **NOW**

PLAYERS: **1**

You've probably noticed in the sales charts that *LEGO Star Wars* has been sitting pretty in the top three for the last few months. That's not a typo, this game is selling because it's freaking awesome. In the demo you'll start back at the beginning of *Episode I* where Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon are almost killed by the trade federation nasties. Then it's



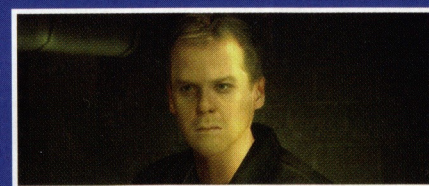
time to raise hell – LEGO-style. Make sure you use the Force on all the objects to collect more hidden studs. If you get stuck with something then check back to part one of our *LEGO Star Wars* playguide from last month. Everything you need to know is in there – except how to nail Amidala (hint, she digs dudes who can't act).

Bonus gaming

Additional demos and videos for your gaming pleasure!

24: The Game

Time is ticking away until this baby comes out!



Pursuit Force

See why we can't wait to have this PSP stunner in our hands!



7 Sins

You'll need to go to confession after witnessing this!



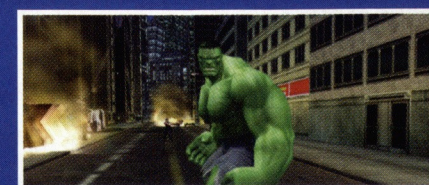
Scarface: The World is Yours

Every dog has its day...



The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction

Smash, smash, smash, smash, smash, smash...



ALSO FEATURED!

Shadow the Hedgehog
The Godfather

Next month



HANDS-ON

WWE SmackDown! Vs
RAW 2006

Stacy steams up
the screen in the
hottest game yet!

Plus:

- Official verdict on Ricky Ponting Cricket!
- First review of Burnout: Revenge!
- Resident Evil 4 studio visit!

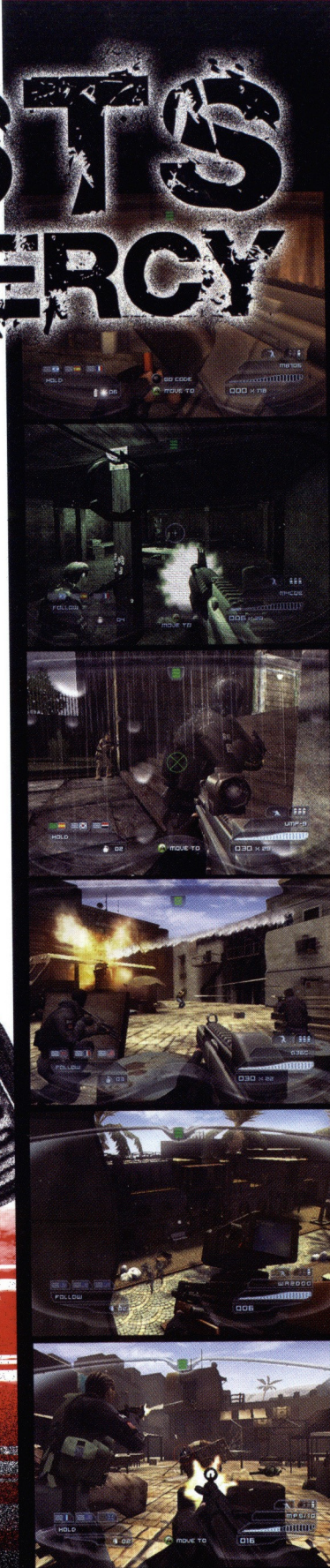
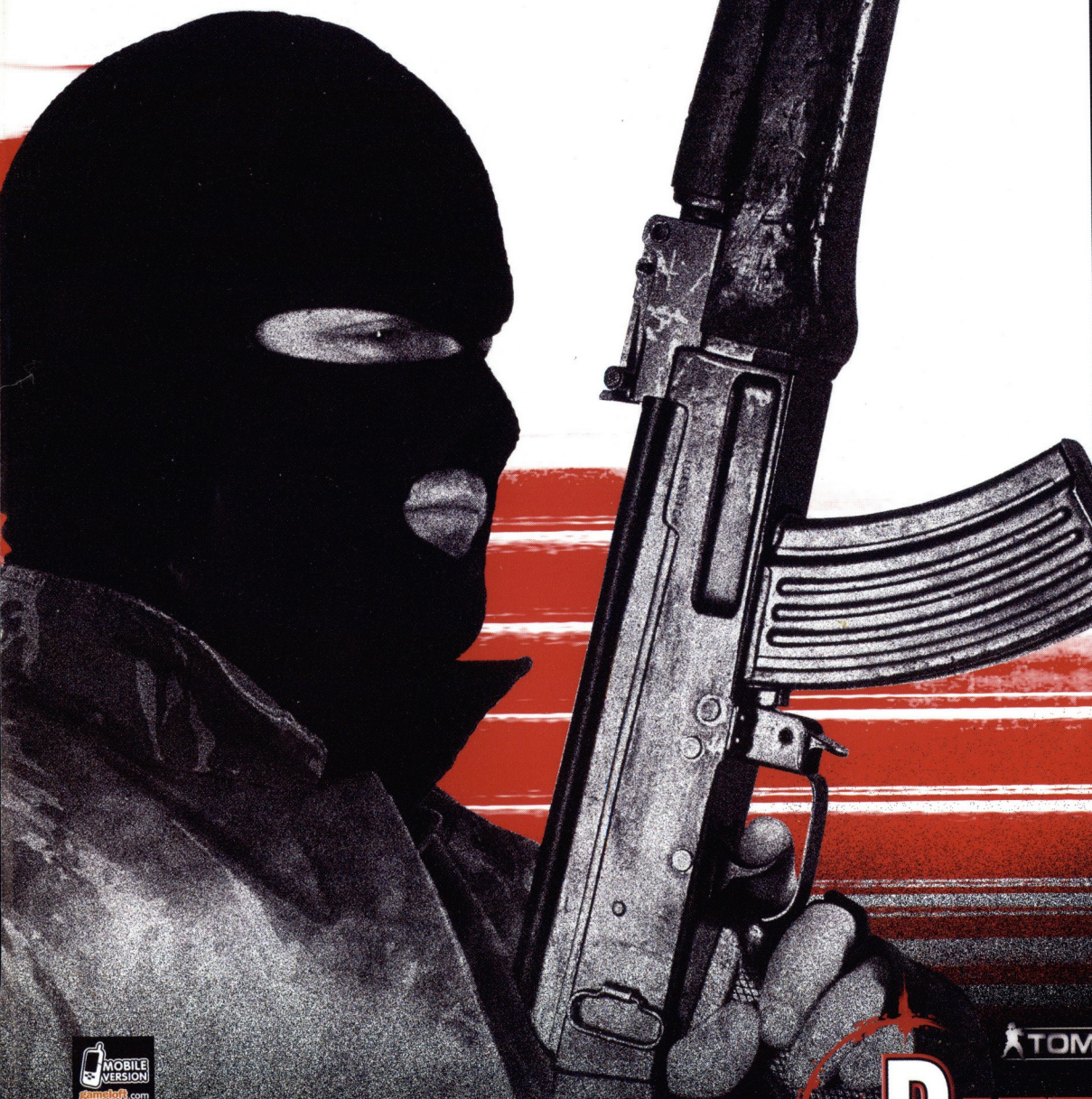
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DEATH AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE

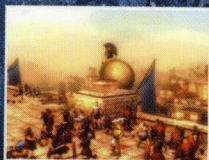
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